



1982

## An Analysis of the Relationships between the Educational Service Region of Mclean and Dewitt Counties and Selected School Districts

Dennis Moll  
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AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN  
THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE REGION OF  
MCLEAN AND DEWITT COUNTIES AND  
SELECTED SCHOOL DISTRICTS

By

DENNIS HAROLD MOLL

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the  
Graduate School of Loyola University of  
Chicago in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Education

May

1982

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Loyola University of Chicago

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE EDUCATIONAL  
SERVICE REGION OF McLEAN AND DeWITT COUNTIES  
AND SELECTED SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The purpose of this dissertation was to study the formal relationships which exist between an intermediate unit of education, the Regional Office of Education for McLean/DeWitt Counties and selected school districts it serves. The study focused on twenty-five of the services and responsibilities mandated by The School Code of Illinois. Questions were raised regarding responsibilities, organization, funding, activities, and documentation from the Regional Office, awareness, utilization, and agreement of the local superintendents, and suggestions for improvement of the relationships and services.

The data for this study were gathered through a review of literature, study of The School Code of Illinois, a personal interview with the Regional Superintendent, mailing a survey instrument to all school district superintendents in the two counties, and personal interviews with half of the responding superintendents.

Based on the data collected as a result of the above procedures, the following were some of the conclusions drawn.

1. The inclusion of antiquated services as responsibilities, the attempts to shift funding

responsibilities from one governmental agency to another, and generally inadequate funding prevent the Educational Service Region from providing services needed by local school districts.

2. Of the twenty-five major responsibilities listed on the survey instrument, 60 percent are used no more than one or two times a year by the school districts.
3. The local superintendents would like to see the following services offered by the Regional Office of Education:
  - a. Programs and services currently available from the State Board of Education Service Center and Program Service Teams;
  - b. More educational Cooperative programs such as those concerning vocational, special education, adult education, cooperative purchases, computer services, gifted, and curriculum specialists;
  - c. Supervision and visitation as now performed by the state's Department of Recognition and Supervision;
  - d. More Regional Office of Education authority and input into the determination and clarification of teacher qualifications for various types of certificates.

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The author is grateful for the considerable support and encouragement given to him by his wife, Connie, and his parents, Harold and Shirlie Moll, without whose help and understanding this dissertation could not have been completed. In addition, the patience and understanding of the author's three children, David, Karen, and Lisa, are also gratefully recognized.

D. H. M.

## VITA

The author, Dennis Harold Moll, is the son of Harold and Shirlie Moll. He was born November 22, 1942, in Evergreen Park, Illinois.

His elementary education was obtained at Cornell Grade School on Chicago's south side, and his secondary education at Elmwood Park High School in that Chicago suburb.

In May of 1964, he received the degree of Bachelor of Science with a major in physical education from the University of Illinois. In May of 1965, he obtained a Master of Education degree from the same university.

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## CHAPTER I

### AN OVERVIEW

#### Introduction

The School Code of Illinois gives a rather vague definition of an Educational Service Region and a more specific definition of a Regional Superintendent of Schools. Chapter 122, Article 3A, Section 1 states: "each County of the State shall, except as otherwise provided in this Article, be designated as an educational service region, referred to in this Article as a 'region.'"<sup>1</sup> In Chapter 122, Article 3, Section 1, the School Code states:

. . . After the effective date of this amendatory Act of 1975, the chief administrative officer of an educational service region shall be designated and referred to as the "regional superintendent of schools" or the "regional superintendent." For purposes of the School Code, any reference to "county superintendent of schools" or "county superintendent" means the regional superintendent of schools. This Article applies to the regional superintendent of a multicounty educational service region formed under Article 3A as well as to a single county region, except that in case of conflict between the provisions of this Article and of Article 3A in the case of a multicounty region, the provisions of Article 3A shall apply. Any reference to "county" in this Article means an educational service region.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>State Board of Education, Illinois Office of Education, The School Code of Illinois 1979 (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing Company, 1979), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

Further on in Article 3, the School Code devotes twenty-two sections to the identification and delineation of the duties of the county superintendent, including but not limited to: distribute state funds, supervise and control school districts, inspect all building plans and schools, register certificates, appoint a truant officer, and take a census of school districts.

These services and others are also recognized by Sir James Robert Marks, Emery Stoops, and Joyce King-Stoops in their 1978 summary of services offered by the intermediate unit of education:

- A. Services in the area of school supervision:
  - 1. Curricular services
  - 2. Communications
  - 3. Operation of schools
  - 4. Consultant services
  - 5. Instructional technology (audio-visual) services and leadership
  - 6. Library services
  - 7. Guidance services
  - 8. Special services
    - (a) Public relations
    - (b) Teacher personnel placement
    - (c) Others
- B. Other services
  - 1. Business management
  - 2. Auditing and accounting
  - 3. School district reorganization
  - 4. Purchasing.<sup>3</sup>

Chapter 122, Article 3-14 of The School Code of Illinois mandates twenty-two duties to be performed by the county superintendent of schools, including some of the

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<sup>3</sup>Sir James R. Marks et al., Handbook of Educational Supervision: A Guide for the Practitioner (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1978), pp. 35-36.

services listed above. Article 3-15 lists fourteen powers the superintendent has to regulate or provide other services.

Of all the varied and complex areas of education, the intermediate unit of education has received the least attention. Of all that has been written about state departments of education, regional departments of education, county departments of education, or other intermediate agencies, it is interesting that Maurice P. Hunt writes:

There is such a paucity of literature on state departments of education, that short of doing a major piece of research, writers have no choice but to be extremely sketchy. State departments of education carry out policies of the legislature and the board, supply educational leadership for the state, keep the legislature informed, inspect schools, license teachers, and supply advice to the individual districts. Referring to state departments, Koerner says ". . . whatever their size and powers, almost without exception they are ill-equipped to carry out their duties, and they command no great respect from the school superintendents of their states."<sup>4</sup>

In 1965 McLeary and Hencley saw the intermediate educational agency as administrative in nature rather than policy making, and they characterized it as being weak, with few resources and little authority. "The result is that intermediate district officers spend considerable time with 'laggard' school districts and little time leading

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<sup>4</sup>Maurice P. Hunt, Foundations of Education: Social and Cultural Perspectives (Chicago: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975), p. 195.



educational advancements."<sup>5</sup> Those same problems and characterizations still exist for the Regional Office of Education in 1981.

Additional problems have arisen from the large number of changes which have taken place in education in Illinois since World War II, and the State Board of Education has indicated that those changes have been detrimental to the operation of the Regional Office of Education (a term synonymous with Educational Service Region). In a recent pamphlet entitled The Future of Educational Service Regions in Illinois, a blue-ribbon commission reports:

The Board believes that one casualty of this period of change has been the role and function of the Educational Service Region. For over 100 years, the responsibilities of the County Superintendent of Schools, predecessor of today's Regional Superintendent, were well defined and essential to the state's educational system; the County Superintendents provided supervision and coordination of the state's 12,000 local districts, most of which were of the one-room variety and which lacked administrative staff at any level. During the 1950s, when massive consolidation of districts provided greater resources at the local level, the traditional role of the intermediate office became duplicative of responsibilities which could be fulfilled by local district staff. Simultaneously, the role of the state education agency was expanded by the state and federal mandates to include many of the responsibilities which previously had been the province of the County Superintendent.

This duplication of responsibilities and the increasing ambiguity of the role of the intermediate office did not go unrecognized; County Superintendents, legislators, and educational scholars initiated a

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<sup>5</sup>Lloyd E. McLeary and Stephen P. Hencley, Secondary School Administration: Theoretical Bases of Professional Practice (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1965), p. 150.

seemingly endless series of studies (more than twenty at last count) to identify new roles appropriate for the County Superintendent. Unfortunately, the recommendations for change flowing from these studies were never implemented, and the statutory responsibilities of the Educational Service Region remain today totally the same as in 1900. The result for the Regional Superintendent is a kind of time warp in which he or she is responsible by law for functions more appropriate to another era and is restricted by law from assuming new responsibilities relevant to current educational needs.<sup>6</sup>

This, then, is the background against which this study was undertaken: a widely used, relatively weak intermediate unit of organization with a long list of duties and services to be performed; operating under a somewhat antiquated set of laws and regulations; and restricted from initiating new procedures or assuming new responsibilities.

#### Purpose of the Study

To any educator who has been a teacher or an administrator in high schools under the jurisdiction of several different Regional Offices of Education, it is readily apparent that the relationships between local school districts and their Regional Offices of Education are often drastically different in each instance. These relationships bridge the gamut from dislike to indifference to respect. Some Educational Service Region officers are aloof, apparently preferring to have as little contact as possible with local district teachers or administrators, and some

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<sup>6</sup>Donald F. Muirhead, The Future of Educational Service Regions in Illinois (Springfield, Ill.: Illinois State Board of Education, 1980), pp. 2-3.

Regional officers maintain close ties with local districts while encouraging frequent contact and exchanges with the teachers and/or administrators. Assuming the services offered and the requirements are the same for all Educational Service Region offices and their superintendents, there must be other factors which contribute to the wide variety of relationships which exist between Regional Offices of Education and their respective local school districts.

The relationships which exist between the Regional Office of Education for McLean/DeWitt Counties and selected school districts which it serves were studied. This particular Educational Service Region was chosen because its geographic location in the center of the state would allow relatively easy access to all individuals needed to participate in the survey and because it exemplifies many of the same characteristics as most of the other ESRs in the state--it serves several school districts of various sizes and several types (unit and secondary as well as rural and urban). This study thus had several major objectives:

1. To determine from The School Code of Illinois and other official publications the mandated responsibilities of the Educational Service Region. Are there some services which are required and others which are optional? Are there limitations--money, time, personnel--as

to the extent to which some services may be offered?

2. To determine the actual services available from the Educational Service Region office by examining documents and interviewing the regional superintendent. Is the Educational Service Region office from McLean/DeWitt Counties meeting its legal obligations by providing all required services? Is it doing more than meeting the bare minimum requirements? In instances where the mandates are not being followed, what are the reasons for the noncompliance?
3. To determine the knowledge and utilization of available services by local school district superintendents. To ascertain which specific services the school district superintendents are not aware are available from the Educational Service Region. To see how frequently school district superintendents or their districts utilize available services. And to find out if any trends emerge in the utilization of specific services.
4. To determine which services are most and least utilized and to determine what problems exist in the utilization of services available from the

Service Region office. Why do the local superintendents or school districts use certain services and not others? Are there limitations or restrictions which, in effect, prohibit or severely limit the utilization of services by local school districts?

5. Are there certain variables, such as school district size, tenure of the superintendents, or distance from the Regional Office which correlate with numbers 3 and 4 above?
6. To ascertain ways that the services of the Educational Service Region office could be better utilized by local school districts and their superintendents. Are there services, possibly presently offered by other agencies, which could best be offered by the Regional Office? Are there needs for services, not currently offered by any particular agency, which could be provided by the Regional Office of Education?

#### Rationale for the Study

Experience and logic indicate that education administration is an expanding, amorphous field which demands that its practitioners be knowledgeable and prepared to handle problems in all areas of education. The need to cope

with questions in such diverse fields as law, business, finance, curriculum, and personnel requires schools to hire administrators who have been thoroughly prepared and given a broad base of understanding in these subjects. With so many changes in educational needs and federal and state requirements in recent years, one begins to wonder how the administrator is able to meet the daily challenges being presented to him by today's society. Indeed, many school districts now hire specialists to handle various aspects of the school program--business managers, curriculum directors, personnel directors, and title program specialists, to name but a few. Unfortunately, only the larger and richer school districts can afford the luxury of having these additional administrators on their staffs. The majority of the school districts in Illinois are still small, local districts with an administrative staff comprised of a superintendent, responsible for the daily operation of the entire district, and one administrator responsible for the daily operation of the high school or grade school. Thus, the majority of school administrators in Illinois are still required to be the local authority for the entire field of education. Try as he will, the administrator must look to agencies outside his own school or district for help with the varied and complex problems he must solve on a regular basis. As he wrestles with these problems, can the capable administrator find the information, material, and resources necessary for

the performance of his duties, or is he forced to work with inadequate data and less than expert guidance?

Among the outside agencies to which an administrator can turn for help and information are other school districts or administrators, colleges and universities, and the office of the Educational Service Region in which he works. While one administrator will often call on a neighboring administrator for advice, the Regional Office of Education is the most dependable local authority on legal matters involving education. An arm of the Illinois Office of Education, there are fifty-seven Educational Service Regions in the state of Illinois at the present time. Although Educational Service Region, by title, implies that office will provide services to school districts, in many instances the relationship between the Regional Office and the local school district is of a voluntary nature. If this relationship is to be a viable one, the Regional Office of Education must be organized in such a manner as to carry out the mandates of the Illinois School Code. Once the Educational Service Region is so organized, then that office must communicate to local school district superintendents and administrators the services available to them and their districts. If a local school district superintendent or administrator is unaware of the services provided by the Regional Office of Education, then, obviously, utilization of these services will be minimal.

It is hoped this study will be of a major significance to a large number of people in a variety of positions related to education. It will provide an opportunity for the Illinois Office of Education and the Educational Service Region superintendents, who have already begun a study of the entire Educational Service Region system in the state of Illinois, to examine the functions performed and the services offered by a regional office. At the same time, the study will indicate which services are least/most utilized by school district superintendents and what services, not presently offered by the Regional Office of Education, they feel would be beneficial. Further, the study will ascertain why certain services are infrequently utilized, possibly leading to a change in services or procedures. As a direct result of their participation in this study, local school district superintendents in McLean and DeWitt Counties should become more familiar with and more aware of the entire range of services offered by the Educational Service Region office. This information should strengthen the relationship between the Regional Office of Education and local school districts, and it should help to improve educational services while increasing the effectiveness of educational service delivery. This same information should also be helpful to departments of Educational Administration at colleges and universities in training future school administrators, since the content of basic administration



courses usually focus to some degree on the functions, services, and responsibilities of all administrative positions, from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to the building principal. Also, since every school district in Illinois is part of some Educational Service Region (ESR) there is a relationship between every school district and the ESR by which it is served. Therefore, it should behoove the future administrators to be aware of services available from the Educational Service Region and of any problems associated with the utilization of those services.

### Major Questions

Major questions answered by this study include the following:

1. What does The School Code of Illinois identify as the major responsibilities of the Educational Service Region? How are these responsibilities further broken down into groups such as services or requirements? Which of those responsibilities are mandated and which are discretionary?
2. How is the Educational Service Region organized to carry out the responsibilities identified by the Illinois School Code?
3. How is the Regional Office of Education funded in order to provide the staff, facilities, and

equipment necessary to offer the services and fulfill the requirements established by the Illinois School Code?

4. What are the specific activities and services available from the Educational Service Region office which meet the identified responsibilities? Are those activities and services sufficiently broad enough to meet the required responsibilities?
5. What evidence or documentation is available from the Regional Office of Education to show that it is actually conducting the services and activities required to meet its responsibilities as identified? Does any of this material indicate that the Educational Service Region has established its own priorities from among the responsibilities established by the Illinois School Code?
6. To what extent are the superintendents of local school districts aware of the major responsibilities and specific services available from the Educational Service Region? In instances where superintendents are not aware of the major responsibilities of the Regional Office of Education, what are the reasons for this lack of awareness?

7. To what extent are the superintendents of local school districts utilizing the services of the Educational Service Region as identified? Which services are most and least frequently utilized? In instances where services are infrequently utilized, what are the reasons for them not being fully utilized? Are the local school district superintendents ever discouraged from using services provided by the Educational Service Region? If so, by whom or what?
8. To what extent do local school district superintendents and the superintendent of the Educational Service Region agree as to the awareness of the local school district superintendents and their utilization of services offered by the Educational Service Region?
9. What steps can be taken to improve the relationship between the Educational Service Region office and the local school districts? Does the Regional Office of Education have the authority to take these steps itself, or must the Illinois Office of Education increase the authority of the Educational Service Region in order to make it a more viable office?

### Methodology Used

A number of different procedures were used to collect the data for this study, including the following:

1. A review of the literature was conducted to determine what writers in the field of education administration have said about the history and development of Educational Service Regions, particularly in regard to functions, responsibilities, and services, and how they view the relationship between the intermediate unit and the local school districts it serves. Included in this review are more than twenty related studies and reports written about the Educational Service Region system in Illinois since 1950. This review of the literature provides necessary background information about the role or functions of Educational Service Regions. The review also provides material necessary to make a comparison in the analysis of data between the existing relationship observed in this study and what the experts perceive that relationship should be.
2. The Illinois School Code was used to identify and define the major responsibilities of the Regional Office of Education.

3. The superintendent of the Educational Service ✓  
Region was interviewed to determine the organization of his office, the specific services available from his office to local school districts, and how he views the importance and frequency of use of those services as they affect the relationships between his office and the local school districts. He was asked to cite and provide evidence of the strategies utilized by the Regional Office of Education to inform local school district superintendents of the services available through the Educational Service Region, and the effect of those strategies on the relationships between the local school districts and the Regional Office of Education. He was also asked to provide data showing the frequency of use of those services, as well as to explain why districts do not use some of the services more often.
4. A survey instrument was developed, field tested, and mailed to all school district superintendents in McLean and DeWitt Counties for the purpose of collecting data regarding their awareness and use of services offered by the Educational Service Region and the resulting relationships with that office. The survey

instrument focused on the relationships as they presently exist, not as they are perceived through attitudes or feelings. The first two sections provide empirical data for analysis while the third section is used to generate recommendations. See Appendix A for a copy of this instrument.

5. Five superintendents of school districts who are not part of the sample were utilized as a panel to judge the construct and content validity of the survey instrument. The responses of these superintendents were the key to the development of a survey instrument which provided useful and significant information. Based upon the responses of these panelists, the survey instrument was modified to reflect their suggested changes.
- 6A. The survey instrument was mailed to all sixteen school district superintendents in McLean and DeWitt Counties. Included in the instructions was a statement guaranteeing the anonymity of the superintendents and the confidentiality of their responses. The instrument sought to determine the level of awareness of the school district superintendents concerning the specific services offered by the Educational Service

Region. The instrument also determined which services are most and least utilized. From the instrument demographic data were collected: size of the school district in area and student population, years of experience as a superintendent in this Educational Service Region, wealth per capita of the school district, and expenditure per capita of the school district. The demographic data were used to determine if relationships are the same for all districts regardless of size, wealth, or experience of the local superintendent.

- 6B. The questions on the survey instrument mailed to the local school district superintendents were also answered by the superintendent of the Educational Service Region during the personal interview. He was asked to answer the questions as he anticipated the answers of the local school district superintendents. The purpose of this procedure was to determine if there were any major discrepancies between the answers of the superintendent of the Regional Office of Education and those of the local school district superintendents. Any discrepancies which appeared were investigated further to determine if the causes for the discrepancies have any effect

on the relationship between the Educational Service Region and the local school districts.

7. Fifty percent of the responding superintendents were randomly selected for an in-depth personal interview. Before this interview took place, however, the superintendents were assured of the confidentiality of their remarks, suggestions, and criticisms. This interview had three major purposes: (1) to validate the responses to the survey instrument, (2) to ascertain what problems exist that affect the level of awareness or extent of utilization of the services offered by the Educational Service Region office, and (3) to seek suggestions for the improvement of the relationship between the Regional Office of Education and the local school districts.

The entire process--and the real purpose--was to obtain as much factual information as possible about the relationships between local school districts and the Regional Office of Education, including the identification of the most/least utilized Educational Service Region services. Keys to the success of this aspect of the study were the survey instrument and the interviews. It was not the intent to ask and then tally a few questions, but to probe into the reasons behind the utilization of services and the



relationships that exist. What causes them and what can be done to make them better? ✓

### Analysis of the Data

Following the collection of the data, the real value of the study lies in the analysis of the collected material. The who, what, where, when, and--most importantly--why of the workings of the relationships between the Regional Office of Education and local school districts. If things are going well in McLean and DeWitt Counties, and it can be determined why, then that information can be of value in helping to improve performances of all Educational Service Regions. Conversely, if there are problems, and it can be determined why, then that information can be beneficial to the superintendent of the Educational Service Region for McLean and DeWitt Counties, as well as providing preventative information to all other regional superintendents.

Once the information had been collected, the data were analyzed in the following manner:

1. The data collected as a result of the interview with the superintendent of the Educational Service Region were compared to the responsibilities of the Regional Office of Education as identified by the Illinois School Code. The purpose of this analysis was to determine to what extent and in what manner the Educational

Service Region is meeting the mandates of the Illinois School Code. Is the Educational Service Region office doing everything required of it? Is it doing more? Less? If so, why?

2. The data collected as a result of the survey instrument were analyzed narratively, using percentages and frequency counts to determine:
  - (a) of which specific service of the Educational Service Region are local school district superintendents most and least aware of their availability,
  - (b) which specific services of the Regional Office of Education are most and least utilized by local school district superintendents, and
  - (c) are there patterns or trends which indicate if demographic variables relate to the awareness or use of services?
3. The data collected as a result of the interviews of the local school district superintendents were analyzed narratively in an effort to determine problems and/or weaknesses that exist between the Educational Service Region and local school districts; any particular strengths of the Regional Office of Education will also be

identified. The data were analyzed by looking for common problems, trends, and common suggestions for the improvement of relationships or pitfalls. The interviews with the local school district superintendents were one of the keys to the success of this study. In the face-to-face interviews, the responses of the superintendents were probed more deeply to provide more in-depth information. Responses by the superintendents were followed by additional questions to determine the real thoughts or reasons for their views.

4. The data collected from the questionnaires completed by the local school district superintendents were compared to the data collected from the interview with the superintendent of the Educational Service Region. This comparison was conducted to determine the level of agreement between the Educational Service Region Superintendent and the local superintendents concerning the local district superintendents' awareness and utilization of services offered by the Educational Service Region. The views from the provider and the user affords some interesting information about real or imagined services.

5. In addition to the narrative analyses, the data are presented graphically, using charts and graphs where appropriate.

### Justification for the Study

In order to improve the quality of educational programs in the state of Illinois, the Illinois General Assembly has created the Educational Service Region. This office has been delegated specific duties and responsibilities. To date no studies have been conducted evaluating the relationship between the Educational Service Region and local school districts. This study provides that evaluation and should serve as a useful guide in the improvement of the services available to local school districts from the Regional Office of Education. The results of this study should prove beneficial to the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Office of Education, the Educational Service Region for McLean and DeWitt Counties, local school districts, and higher education classes in the field of administration and supervision, as explained earlier in this chapter.

### Chapter Outline

A four-chapter organization design was selected for this study. The first chapter contains a background of the study, along with an overview and the methodology used.

Chapter II provides a review of relative literature. An analysis of the data generated by the study is presented in the Chapter III, with the conclusions, recommendations, and implications for further study presented in the fourth chapter.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### General History of the Office

Although the intermediate unit of school administration has been a structural part of public education in the United States for almost 150 years, it remains the least understood administrative unit.<sup>1</sup> As was true for public education generally in the United States, school administration evolved gradually as a profession, developing as a response to local needs rather than to any national plan, and the need for an intermediate unit of school administration was recognized early in the history of public education.<sup>2</sup> The intermediate unit began as a subordinate unit of the state level of school government and represented the downward extension of administrative control from the state level to one closer to the local school districts.

It is apparent that the intermediate unit of public education was created to overcome some of the shortcomings in local school administrative units. The early

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<sup>1</sup>Stephen J. Knezevich, Administration of Public Education (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1975), p. 233.

<sup>2</sup>Robert A. Pringle, "A Proposal for a New Intermediate Administrative Structure for Education in Illinois" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1964), p. 15.

functions of this office were primarily administrative, statistical, and supervisory. The service concept of the intermediate unit was not to be developed until a much later date. . . . In effect, the early role of the intermediate unit was that of an "arm" or adjunct of the state educational agency to feed statistical and supervisory reports to the state department, and to receive for distribution to local districts the school funds dispersed by a state agency.<sup>3</sup>

The intermediate unit of school administration, or the RESA, is a "betweenner." Structurally and functionally, it lies between the state on the one hand and the local district on the other. It is an arm of the state but occupies territory that encompasses many local school districts. It may be charged by the state educational agency with certain educational responsibilities, but exists to provide selected educational services to the local district.<sup>4</sup>

Harold S. Davis agrees with Knezevich, saying that the phrase "intermediate unit of school administration" has traditionally been used to designate that office which occupied an intermediate position between the state office of education and the local school districts. While the original intent of the intermediate unit was one of regulation and control as an agent of the state office of education, recent changes in structure and function of the intermediate unit have made its primary purpose to be that of providing needed educational services.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Knezevich, Administration of Public Education, p. 153.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>5</sup>Harold S. Davis, Educational Service Centers in the U.S.A. (Hartford, Conn.: Connecticut State Department of Education, 1976), p. 72.

The intermediate unit of school administration and the county superintendent had its beginnings during the same period that the state and city superintendencies emerged. New York State appointed a state superintendent (of education) in 1812, nine years later abolishing the position and making the secretary of state ex officio superintendent until 1854, when the office of state superintendent of public instruction was created. Maryland had a state superintendent from 1826 to 1828; then abolished the office until 1868, when it was reestablished. Michigan established the office of state superintendent of common schools in 1829, changing the title to "state superintendent of public instruction," which it has continuously remained to the present time.<sup>6</sup>

During the years when districts were mostly primary, the county school offices were responsible for enforcing statutes, regulations, and certain quality standards. These included the length of the school day and year, examination of teachers through the county normal school. In addition, the county superintendent was responsible for determining that certain curriculum requirements were met, instructional materials were adequate, and buildings (especially toilets) were adequate in terms of state standards.

During this period the county school officer, although appointed locally, was, in effect, an officer of the state and was required to submit an annual report to the state superintendent of public instruction describing the status of education within his jurisdiction. Duties and responsibilities were clearly defined. Historical records indicate that role definition and clarification were not a problem. Each level of authority, local, county, and state, seemed to have a clear and acceptable understanding of the role and function of each, and the relationships among these levels. It was not until the growth of K-12 districts occurred that the county school officer began to suffer from problems of role definition and clarification.

With the growth of K-12 districts the need for supervision by the county superintendent began to decline. K-12 district boards hired superintendents and other administrators who performed the supervisory and administrative functions. In addition, standards for teacher certification were raised, making the county

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<sup>6</sup>Shirley Cooper and Charles O. Fitzwater, County School Administration (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), pp. 135-36.



normal school obsolete and eventually extinct. During this period of decline in responsibility certain other functions were assigned to the county school board, such as boundary changes and data collection. However, these responsibilities did not constitute the same degree of authority and responsibility previously ascribed to the county unit in the management of the local educational enterprise.

As the influence of the county superintendent declined, a movement developed statewide and at the national level urging the strengthening of the county unit and the development of an intermediate school district.<sup>7</sup>

Rae M. Lewis continues the discussion of the intermediate unit of school administration, calling it an educational service agency, or ESA.

The diverse ESAs that have emerged in the past ten to fifteen years had common roots in the county school office. However, growth from these roots was irregular. During the decade of the 20s, the emergence of large local school districts which demanded and received autonomy, reduced county educational services primarily to rural areas. Improved roads and vehicles further eroded the realm of the county office. In the late 40s and early 50s the number of local education agencies had become so large that efficient administration and delivery of services was a problem. Merging of local districts, cooperatively sharing resources and services, and formation of specialized regional service centers were solutions. Those using these approaches borrowed some roles and functions from the county school office. Modification of these to fit particular organizational patterns has produced most of the existing relationships in the present three-echelon system.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Alexander J. Kloster, "A Study of Intermediate School District Functions and Organizational Structure," a study for the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators, Marquette, Michigan, 1978, pp. 8-9. (Photocopied.)

<sup>8</sup>Rae M. Lewis, "Potential Working Relationships Between ESAs and the R & D Exchange," a study for the National Institute of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C., 1979, p. 6. (Photocopied.)

Roald F. Campbell and his associates also talk about this period of time leading up to the reorganization of the intermediate unit.

School district reorganization over the last three decades has affected the nature and function of the intermediate unit. The intermediate unit, up until the end of World War II, particularly as reflected in the office of the county superintendent, was a product of rural America. Many counties in the Midwest contained seventy-five to one hundred small school districts, most of which operated a one-room, eight-grade school. Each district had a board of trustees or directors who knew little about schools, and each district had a teacher who had completed the eighth grade and passed the county teacher's examination in the school subjects.

The schools, the teachers, and the board members the county superintendent was to visit, often by stipulation, no less than once a year. The county superintendent acted as the arm of the state in seeing that minimum legal requirements were met, in distributing small amounts of state funds usually derived from school lands, and in supplying simple statistics to the state superintendent of public instruction.<sup>9</sup>

Knezevich notes that "the traditional intermediate unit, particularly the county superintendency, has long been subject to criticism."<sup>10</sup> This criticism helped strengthen the school district reorganization movement which

. . . gained momentum in the mid-twentieth century. In New York the number of school districts was reduced from 9,500 in 1925 to 1,932 in 1955. In Illinois the major reorganization took place in a period of ten years, 1945 to 1955, and reduced the number of school districts from approximately 12,000 to 2,349. In the United States the number of districts reached a peak of about 127,000 in

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<sup>9</sup>Roald F. Campbell et al., The Organization and Control of American Schools (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1980), p. 126.

<sup>10</sup>Knezevich, Administration of Public Education, p. 238.

the 1930s, was reduced to approximately 80,000 by 1950, and by 1975 the number of operating districts was only about 16,000.<sup>11</sup>

Knezevich continues the discussion by noting:

In addition, reorganization since 1941 has eliminated a large number of weak and ineffective school districts and reduced the number of one-teacher schools from over 100,000 to less than 1,000. Because each remaining district is stronger and staffed with a local district superintendent, assistant superintendents, and principals professionally prepared to execute their work, they no longer require the type of supervision and administration traditionally provided by the county superintendent for weak local districts.<sup>12</sup>

Lewis goes on to say that:

The development of educational service agencies during the past decade has been impressive. Eleven states (Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington, West Virginia, Washington) currently have statewide networks of educational service agencies. Another three (Colorado, Oregon, New York) have partial statewide systems; eleven have educational cooperatives (Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Idaho, Wyoming); two have strengthened county school systems (California, Ohio); and three have decentralized state education agencies (Massachusetts, North Carolina, Kentucky). This development has not been the result of a significant increase in the number of states adopting the three-level system, but rather an expansion and refinement of the services provided by an already existing middle echelon unit. This fact indicates that there are both stimulating and inhibiting factors affecting the growth of ESAs.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Roald F. Campbell et al., Introduction to Educational Administration (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1977), pp. 32-33.

<sup>12</sup>Knezevich, Administration of Public Education, p. 238.

<sup>13</sup>Lewis, "Potential Working Relationships," p. 5.

In Illinois the position of the county superintendent of schools evolved from that of the county land commissioner. The early responsibilities of the intermediate units of school administration and their superintendents were:

. . . to furnish statistical information on local districts, to supervise the weak local districts with no district superintendent, and to administer the distribution of aids or other items in the name of the state. Much of the time of the intermediate superintendent and his staff was spent with rural and one-teacher schools. The work of the county superintendent was with the weak and ineffectively organized local school units in an effort to improve the quality of such districts.<sup>14</sup>

As intermediate units of administration developed and inherited roles and functions, tried to coordinate their activities with those of existing educational entities, such as the state education agency, local education agencies, universities, community colleges, municipal governments, and federally created units such as regional labs and centers and CETA manpower offices. Personnel of . . . ESAs have had to develop effective working relationships with individuals and groups in these educational systems--the superintendents, members of boards of education and other policy groups, administrators, university personnel, state education agency consultants, teachers, specialists, and support staff. They have had to learn to coordinate services across and within educational programs--special, general, vocational, career, adult, and bilingual education, and professional development.<sup>15</sup>

A review of the literature on regional education service agencies reveals striking similarities among their roles and functions. Although their basic forms, methods and purposes of creation, governance, organization, and financing differ from state to state, and

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<sup>14</sup>Knezevich, Administration of Public Education, p. 157.

<sup>15</sup>Lewis, "Potential Working Relationships," pp. 10-11.

even within states, their roles and functions translated into actual services are remarkably similar. Practically all perform some duties and functions in support of the state education agency and in providing general educational leadership. Additionally, most function as deliverers of special education services. Roles in providing specialized services in such areas as management, media, staff development, curriculum, and educational planning, and in conducting vocational and technical education programs, are also fairly common among existing ESAs.<sup>16</sup>

Lewis concludes his discussion of the roles and functions of the educational service agencies by saying they

. . . must be comprehensive, flexible, of high quality, and responsive to the needs of the population served. Although there are concerns by many that more specificity be developed in terms of ESA roles and functions, there is ample evidence that the needs of local school districts vary in many ways. Therefore, it would be impossible to list specifically recommended services that would be appropriate for ESAs in different states and difficult to establish such a list for the units within any given state. Certain general recommendations regarding roles and functions, however, can be derived. . . .

1. The ESA has a major role to play in coordination and leadership. This role is not authoritarian; rather, it reinforces the policies of the state board of education and the integrity of the local education agency. The education service agency emphasizes educational planning, development, communication, and coordination. It is leadership-oriented, and its role is to seek solutions to educational problems requiring information, human skills, and utilization of knowledge and technology. This role complements the state education leadership function and interprets and augments its regulatory role. It simultaneously provides requested coordination and service to local districts without impinging on the authority of their governing boards.
2. The education service agency has a unique role in educational planning. It is in a better position to identify and act on the emerging and changing demands of society than either the state educational agency, which is bound by statutes requiring

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 14-15.

regulation and inspection, or the local district, which is beset by operational problems. The ESA can assume feedforward planning functions which will identify future actions and feedback functions which relay information about present status to appropriate audiences.

3. The provision of specific services to local education agencies is another task/role of the education service agency. These services are those which the ESA can provide with greater economy, adequacy, quality, and/or efficiency than the local district. They may include data processing of school district payrolls, pupil attendance accounting, testing, media booking, and storage and retrieval of curricular and management information. They may also be related to improving the quality of educational services, including such activities as staff development, research, technical assistance in development and utilization of instructional materials and courses of study, operation of specific programs where low pupil incidence or necessity for specialized techniques or equipment are local constraints, and provision of other services which promote equal educational opportunities for all children. The role of the education service agency in providing such services can be expanded to include the development of better and more appropriate means of measuring educational outcomes; of identifying and disseminating promising educational practices; of promoting cost-effective principles in educational programming activities; of finding or creating processes or alternatives from which local agencies can select to improve and advance education; and of promoting educational interchange between and among rural, suburban, and urban school districts.
4. The education service agency also has an important, though not widely recognized or acclaimed, role in influencing educational legislation. As ESAs have created new patterns of communication within states, developed new spheres of political influence, and become a composite extension of state and local education agencies, their leaders have become advocates for legislation that will improve the functioning of the local districts which they serve, their own organizations, the state educational agency, and the overall system of education in the nation. Unlike the state educational agency, they are not hampered by proximity to the state legislative body with its close financial ties and the necessity of

programmatic approval. They have the benefit of a larger representative base than any single local district and hence a more audible political voice. They are more apt to seek legislation to address issues and to solve problems than to benefit themselves or their organizations. They can work effectively with state legislatures to interpret and emphasize local problems as they relate to regional and state needs and mandates.

5. Federal legislation, which has created categorical and other educational programs, has had impact on the state, intermediate, and local education agencies also. Title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (PL 89-10) and subsequent amendments are aimed at strengthening state education agencies, and Section 505 further encourages cooperative projects among these agencies. Other titles of PL 89-10 identify ESAs as local education agencies and permit them to apply for funds and administer and operate certain educational programs. The latitude in this and other federal legislation regarding program planning and operation has created another area of local/ESA cooperation. It has caused the development of a corps of ESA/local district professionals who work together, usually under ESA leadership, to influence federal educational legislation. These professionals testify before Congressional committees and work with federal agencies to provide information about the factual implementation of legislation to provide services to students. They make suggestions about appropriate revisions to rules and regulations governing program operation and work with Congressional staff members to provide field-related information and to advance possible extensions of current programs and new directions. Additionally, they attend committee and subcommittee hearings and monitor national advisory council meetings. As informed participants in the legislative process, they capably and appropriately function as information sources for those who are responsible for good educational legislation.
6. Finally, the education service agency has a logical and legitimate role as the educational advocate for and coordinator of intergovernmental services in its region. The need for such an advocate/coordinator to bring about cooperation among general governmental, health, welfare, social, and other school services deliverers is well established. The ESA in many states has a mandate to coordinate such

services. In meeting this mandate, it has developed the necessary competence and comprehensive perspective to represent and express the interests, concerns, and priorities of the total educational community in relation to other regional service units.<sup>17</sup>

Just what the responsibilities and functions of the intermediate unit of school administration are is a question that has long been debated. "Traditionally, proponents of the intermediate unit have suggested that the chief functions of such a unit are: general educational leadership, specialized educational services, and certain management and purchasing services for small districts."<sup>18</sup> Campbell goes on to note: "A growing number of states have accepted the service function of the intermediate unit and have provided, over a period of time, state funds to the unit for services."<sup>19</sup> He asserts that "Thus, an increasingly influential movement that clearly perceives service, not regulation and control, as the primary function of the intermediate or middle-echelon unit of school administration is already underway."<sup>20</sup>

One advocate of such regional service centers is E. Robert Stephens. He lists the following benefits of these regional service centers:

1. They can facilitate the provision to local districts of easily accessible and definite self-determined

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., pp. 20-25.

<sup>18</sup>Campbell et al., Organization and Control of American Schools, p. 121.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 122.      <sup>20</sup>Ibid.



- supplemental and supportive services of high quality.
2. They can facilitate the development and/or provision of required programs and services to local districts in the event the local unit is unable to do so.
  3. They can contribute substantially to the equalization of educational opportunities for all children by minimizing the accident of geography and neutralizing artificial barriers as important determinants of the kind of educational programs available.
  4. They can promote the better utilization of known applications and force a systematic search for new applications of cost-benefit/cost-effectiveness principles in the delivery of educational programs and services within the state school system.
  5. They can contribute to the healthy interface between urban, suburban, and rural interests in the search for solutions to areawide educational and educationally related issues.
  6. They can contribute significantly to the development of a statewide research, development, evaluation, and dissemination network in the state and promote the concentration of and best use of resources to foster the network once it is in place.
  7. They can contribute significantly to the establishment of a statewide network of resident change agents possessing both authenticity in the eyes of their principal constituencies and legal mandates, where necessary; they can also more readily implement the staffing and resources necessary to effect fundamental change in the workings of the state school system on a regular and planned basis.
  8. They can substantially promote meaningful local school district involvement in statewide and regional planning and decision-making processes.<sup>21</sup>

Stephens goes on to point out that the change in terminology from intermediate units of school administration reflects the belief that these units are now:

. . . essentially organizations intended to serve constituent local school districts (rather than agencies

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<sup>21</sup>E. Robert Stephens, Regional Educational Service Agencies (Arlington, Virginia: Educational Research Service, Inc., 1975), pp. 57-58.

designed primarily to perform administrative and regulatory functions for the state education agency as was true of the dominant historical middle-echelon unit--the county school system).<sup>22</sup>

Campbell et al. note that the reorganization of the intermediate unit has generated a great deal of interest, and it has:

. . . triggered the creation of a new organization in Washington, D.C., to represent the interests of the nation's educational service agencies. In February 1977 the National Organization of County, Intermediate, and Educational Service Agencies (NOCIESA) was created at the national convention of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA). This new organization, a contract agency of AASA, has established a working national office and is engaged in such activities as publishing a monthly newsletter, conducting regional workshops on career education for small school districts through the resources of educational service agencies, representing the agencies in the Congress and in the executive branch, and disseminating information about the regional service agencies through research and publications.<sup>23</sup>

While many of the recent developments have been impressive, the work that has been done has been inconsistent and insufficient.

In the rural setting, especially, many districts will continue to depend upon the traditional intermediate unit for certain services. Such rural intermediate units should continue to meet the following criteria:

1. The major functions of the intermediate unit should be: planning for local district reorganization; determining the location of school plants; providing supplemental financing designed to further equalize educational opportunity; offering specialized instructional programs such as technical and junior college programs; providing specialized educational

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>23</sup>Campbell et al., Organization and Control of American Schools, p. 130.

services such as psychiatric help to pupils in local school districts, and providing educational leadership to local school districts.

2. Whenever possible, there should be a minimum enrollment of 10,000 pupils in the public schools of the areas included in an intermediate unit. An enrollment of 20,000 to 30,000 pupils would be even better.
3. The boundaries of the intermediate unit should be coterminous with the outer boundaries of a logical combination of local school districts which are to constitute the area of the intermediate unit. There should be no required relationship between the boundaries of the intermediate unit and the boundaries of the counties.
4. Each intermediate unit should be under the direct control of a board of education elected at large by the residents of the intermediate area. The board should appoint the intermediate superintendent and determine salary and tenure for that position. The board should adopt policies to govern the operation of the intermediate unit, employ the necessary personnel upon recommendation of the superintendent, and appraise the effectiveness of the policies as they are carried out by the employed personnel. An advisory committee to the intermediate unit board should be elected from the membership of the local district boards of education.
5. The intermediate board of education should be fiscally independent; it should have the independent taxing power and the authority to determine its own budget. State funds should also be made available to intermediate units. The intermediate unit board should also have power to contract with local district boards to provide certain services.
6. The intermediate superintendent should be a person with the qualifications and competence to earn and deserve high professional recognition by administrators in all types of local school districts. In order to obtain a superintendent of such quality, an intermediate board of education should not be limited in its choice of a superintendent by residence requirements.
7. Both in structure and functions the intermediate unit should be sufficiently flexible to adapt to changing educational conditions and needs. There should be legal provisions for the reorganization of intermediate units similar to those presently applicable to local districts. As local districts become capable of providing more of their own

services, it should be possible for an intermediate unit to discontinue a function no longer needed and to assume another which changing conditions indicate to be desirable.<sup>24</sup>

Few decisions have the far-reaching impact on a school system as the selection of its superintendent, and no school system, whatever the excellence of its other qualities, can accomplish its purpose without capable leadership. Historically, the selection of county superintendents by vote of the people has been--and still is, according to Knezevich--more widely used than any other method. This method of choosing the county superintendent has its drawbacks, however, as Knezevich points out:

Election of the county superintendent of schools, whether he serves the intermediate unit or the basic administrative unit, is very difficult to justify. Politics, rather than what's best for the educational program, supports election of such officers. So long as this continues, the office of the county superintendent will be surrounded too much by politics. It will reduce the chances of selecting professionally competent individuals for such posts.<sup>25</sup>

The qualifications for the chief administrative officer of the intermediate unit of education have varied greatly through the years. In 1880 college or normal school graduation was not specifically required of county superintendents by any state. Even by 1930 only four states

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., pp. 131-32.

<sup>25</sup>Knezevich, Administration of Public Education, p. 237.

required that amount of educational preparation.<sup>26</sup> By 1950, however, thirty states required at least four years of college preparation. In addition to professional training in college,

. . . most states require previous professional experience of county superintendents. While there is great variation in these requirements, there is widespread evidence that some experience in classroom teaching is regarded as an important qualification. Although most states require teaching experience only, six states also specify previous administrative experience as a requirement.<sup>27</sup>

Campbell and his colleagues summarize the work of Cooper and Fitzgerald concerning the intermediate unit as follows:

1. There has been a growing recognition of education as a state function and the need for a workable number of intermediate offices to facilitate communication between the state and a great number of local school districts.
2. In the early stages the intermediate unit was seen essentially as an extension of the arm of the state department of education.
3. Over the years, there has been a gradual transfer of the functions of the intermediate office from a lay board to a professional or semi-professional officer.
4. Progress toward making the intermediate office more than a perfunctory one has been slow, for people resisted any encroachments upon their exercise of control of education at the local district level.
5. In recent years, the intermediate unit has come to be viewed by many people as an agency to provide

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<sup>26</sup>John K. Norton, "Building the Profession of Educational Administration--The Road Ahead," The School Executive, November 1950, pp. 38-41.

<sup>27</sup>Cooper and Fitzwater, County School Administration, p. 165.

small school districts services which they cannot ordinarily provide for themselves.<sup>28</sup>

Rae M. Lewis addresses the benefits derived from

#### ESAs:

Research on the ESA is just beginning to emerge. Some descriptive studies dealing with the history of the unit exist, and some empirical studies of specific units and problems in various states have been conducted. Out of these sporadic studies have come some commonly claimed benefits of the ESA, usually supported by the judgment of close observers. . . .

1. ESAs can coordinate educational planning and systematic management in state, regional, and local settings. They have greater potential for developing local district involvement in planning and decision making beyond the realm of local jurisdiction.
2. ESAs can contribute to equality of educational opportunity for all children by minimizing financial, geographic, and other barriers affecting access to available educational programs.
3. ESAs can maintain articulation among the various segments of the state system of public education, e.g., attendance accounting, financial accounting, school election routines.
4. ESAs can provide personnel who will act cooperatively with other professionals (SEA, university, other) to bring about appropriate educational change. This corps of professionals can work effectively with both local constituents and state consultants to assess, modify, and implement mandated and alternative programs.
5. ESAs can provide to local education agencies comprehensive, readily available, high quality supplemental services which have been mutually defined and agreed upon. These may include computer services for budget, financial reports, payroll, membership reports, student programming and assignments, instructional programs, cooperative purchasing programs, and psychological, social work, and speech correction services.
6. ESAs can serve as the planning agency for developing instructional programs to implement mandated educational legislation such as special education,

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<sup>28</sup>Campbell et al., Organization and Control of American Schools, p. 118.

career and vocational education, adult education, and professional development.

7. ESAs can promote cooperation and educational interchange among urban, suburban, and rural education agencies to bring about solutions to regional educational issues.
8. ESAs can help bring about the development and use of appropriate statewide networks in such areas as dissemination, information storage and retrieval, evaluation, and research and development.
9. ESAs can promote cooperative ventures among local school districts to devise educationally sound and cost-effective solutions to common problems.
10. ESAs can maintain a degree of flexibility in organization and delivery of services not possible at the state or local levels because of the intermediate status between legal responsibility and actual operation of schools. This flexibility allows for the diversity necessary for differing goals, immediate and comprehensive response to grass-roots needs, creative organizational relationships with other educational partners, and new patterns and techniques for problem solving and shared decision making.<sup>29</sup>

A great deal of time and effort has been devoted to the study of the intermediate unit of school administration in recent years. In discussing the intermediate unit of today, Campbell mentions some of the changes.

In the past decade or so substantial changes have been made in more than twenty states in the organization of the intermediate units. In one case, Kansas, the county as an intermediate unit was eliminated entirely. In other cases, the number of intermediate units was reduced either by elimination or by combining counties for intermediate purposes. In Nebraska, even though the county superintendency was retained, nineteen service units were created. Texas, in a sweeping reorganization, created a statewide network of twenty educational service centers for its 254 counties. Iowa created Joint County School Systems, Georgia established a statewide network of Cooperative Educational Service Agencies, and West Virginia in 1972 established multi-county

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<sup>29</sup>Lewis, "Potential Working Relationships," pp. 7-9.

Regional Educational Service Agencies. In 1975 Montana mandated the creation of five Special Education Regional Services and Virginia enacted legislation to create voluntary Regional Educational Service Agencies. In 1976 Indiana passed enabling legislation for the creation of Educational Centers, and Minnesota established ten Educational Cooperative Service Units.

These and other actual and pending changes receiving serious study in numerous other states suggest that the intermediate unit is on trial. Possibly the intermediate unit of school administration has always been evolving. It may be that any unit which attempts to find a place between the legally fixed responsibility for education at the state level and the jealously guarded operation of schools at the local district level is inevitably in flux. In any case, this is an issue which needs to be examined closely.<sup>30</sup>

### Illinois History of the Office

The first forerunners in Illinois of today's

Educational Service Regions were organizational structures

. . . created to handle land transactions, and resulted from the provisions of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. That act required that the sixteenth section of each township in the area known as the Northwest Territory be reserved for the purpose of helping to support education. In 1818, when Illinois was admitted to statehood, its First General Assembly responded to this stipulation by directing county commissioners to appoint three trustees for each township; these trustees were charged with laying out the sixteenth sections of the respective townships, collecting the rents accruing from these "school lands" and apportioning the funds among those citizens who had contributed to the support of a common school. Later, the trustees were designated as the legal custodians for real estate and money belonging to the townships and made responsible for the purchase of school libraries and the acquisition of real estate for school buildings.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Campbell et al., Organization and Control of American Schools, pp. 119-20.

<sup>31</sup>"Educational Service Region Study Commission Briefing Book," a study by the Illinois State Board of



It was not very long before the office and duties were expanded.

In 1829, the Illinois General Assembly created a second agent for the administration of school lands. The "county commissioner of school lands," more commonly known as the "county school commissioner," was to be appointed by the county commissioner and was to serve as the primary agent for the sale of school lands. No salary was provided, only a small percentage of receipts from the sale of the lands. Gradually this role was expanded to include the receipt of certain school funds and the distribution of these funds to teachers and township treasurers. In 1841, consistent with other county functions, the office was made elective.<sup>32</sup>

Before Abraham Lincoln was elected president he served in the State Legislature in Illinois. In 1840 he presented the following resolution to the State Legislature:

"Resolved, that the Committee on Education be instructed to inquire into the expediency of providing a law for the examination as to their qualifications of persons offering themselves as school teachers, that no teacher should receive any part of the public school funds who shall not have passed such examination." Five years later Mr. Lincoln's suggestion was enacted into state law, whereby teaching certificates were granted to persons of good moral character who could properly teach Orthography, Reading in English, Penmanship, Arithmetic, English Grammar, Modern Geography, and the History of the United States. These examinations were conducted by the County School Commissioner, who issued certificates to successful candidates.<sup>33</sup>

By 1845 additional educational responsibilities were assigned to the office, and the title of school land

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>William B. Brigham, The Story of McLean County and Its Schools (Bloomington, Ill.: William B. Brigham, 1951), p. 50.

commissioner was changed to that of county superintendent of schools.<sup>34</sup>

Although the county school commissioner is regarded as the progenitor of the county superintendent of schools, he was essentially a land officer during these early years of education in Illinois. The few supervisory activities provided for during this period were the responsibility of the township trustees, who until 1845 examined prospective teachers and granted teaching certificates.<sup>35</sup>

This role and its attendant responsibilities changed with the creation of the title of county superintendent of schools in 1845.

In this role, he was required to visit schools, advise school officers, do some supervising of teachers and curriculum, and exercise educational leadership. He was also given authority to examine and certify teachers. Ten years later, in 1855, these new functions . . . were strengthened by legislation which authorized pay (\$2 per day) for the specific service of visiting schools.<sup>36</sup>

In 1870 a new State Constitution was adopted in Illinois, calling for a system of public schools. Section One, Article VIII reads: "The General Assembly shall provide a thorough and efficient system of free schools, whereby all children of this State may receive a good common school education."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Ellwood P. Cubberly, State School Administration (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1927), p. 208.

<sup>35</sup>"Educational Service Region . . . Briefing Book," unpaginated.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Illinois, Revised Statutes (1961), sec. 1, art. VII, p. 18.

The development of the intermediate unit of education and the role of its chief administrative officer

. . . directly reflected the demographic, social, and political characteristics of Illinois in the nineteenth century--i.e.:

1. Most citizens of the state lived in rural areas, dependent on an agrarian economy and with limited transportation and communication resources.
2. The one-room school serving all grades in a small geographic area was considered the most feasible means of providing accessible public education for the state's diffuse population; literally thousands of such one-room school districts were organized and perpetuated well into the twentieth century.
3. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction was considered responsible for educational leadership rather than direct supervision of local schools. For almost a century, the state education officer had fewer than twenty employees.<sup>38</sup>

As a result, the holder of the office of the County Superintendent of Schools became a vital part of the state's educational structure.

He was uniquely positioned to assess the quality of school programs and facilities, to upgrade teaching and the management of schools, to promote some degree of uniformity of curriculum, and to collect and compile information needed to make a decision on a statewide basis.<sup>39</sup>

Through the course of the next one hundred years, the duties, powers, and services of the office of the County Superintendent of Schools gradually changed. Certification of teachers--once the responsibility of the County Superintendent--now is performed by the Illinois Office of

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<sup>38</sup>"Educational Service Region . . . Briefing Book," unpaginated.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

Education. As the number of school students and the length of the school term increased, the County Superintendent became more involved in high school programs and curriculum; later, the hiring of an Assistant County Superintendent was authorized to provide more curriculum services. Many of the intermediate offices have now assumed the responsibility for the purchase and distribution of paper, school supplies, audiovisual materials, and other materials. For the most part, however, many duties of the intermediate unit of education remain of a clerical or statistical nature. The various duties and powers of the County Superintendent are described in The School Code of Illinois in Article 3, Sections 8 through 15.14 inclusive.

Things remained fairly quiet and routine in the state's educational structure until the end of World War II. In 1945 the Illinois General Assembly passed the County School Survey Law, requiring eventual reorganization, consolidation, and the reduction of the number of school districts in Illinois. As a result of this Act, the number of school districts was drastically reduced from over 11,000 to just 1,552 in 1961. Not only did this Act dramatically alter the organization of school districts within the state, but it also had a tremendous impact on the office of the County Superintendent of Schools. Suddenly, as a result of the reorganization and consolidation, school districts were

capable of performing many of the services previously handled by the County Office. The one-room schoolhouse generally became a thing of the past, and with its demise went much of the time the County Superintendent spent in supervision and visitation of schools. Soon questions began to be raised about the necessity of having this office. Over the course of the next twenty years a number of studies were conducted which were aimed at the improvement, alteration, reduction, or elimination of the office of the County Superintendent of Schools. The following is a chronological review of some of those studies and their conclusions.

One of the major contributors to the study of the office of the County Superintendent of Schools in Illinois has been Dr. William P. McClure, who took part in at least five such studies over a twenty-year period. The study he conducted in 1956, entitled Potential Educational Services of the Illinois Office of County School Superintendent, was under the auspices of the Research Committee of the Illinois Association of County School Superintendents. McClure recognized that:

Reorganization of local districts is one of the most outstanding factors which has altered the relationships of the county office to local districts and the services which the county office is rendering, or which it might render. Some services are needed in many local school systems for which the districts themselves cannot provide adequately either because of size, nature of district, or financial limitation. Some of the services which the county office has performed in the past are today in need of elimination or change because of

changed conditions in the nature of the schools themselves and in the circumstances under which the schools are organized and administered.<sup>40</sup>

The thrust of this study was the identification of services needed by local school districts which could be provided more economically and effectively by the county office than by either the local districts or the state office of education.

In an unpublished 1957 dissertation, Normal McClintock was one of several people to propose that the immediate unit should be restructured on a large scale--12,000-student minimum--for economic reasons. He also recommended an elected lay board appoint the superintendent to run the office.<sup>41</sup>

In 1964 Robert Pringle suggested that Illinois be divided into eighteen intermediate units, each with an elected lay board and an appointed superintendent.<sup>42</sup>

McClure's second major study was concluded in 1966 and was co-sponsored by the Task Force on Education, Governor Otto Kerner, State Superintendent of Public

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<sup>40</sup>Dr. William P. McClure, Potential Educational Services of the Illinois Office of County School Superintendent (Urbana, Ill.: Illinois Association of County School Superintendents Research Committee, 1956), p. 1.

<sup>41</sup>Norman E. McClintock, "Development of Criteria for an Intermediate School District and Their Application in Illinois" (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1957).

<sup>42</sup>Pringle, "Proposal for a New Intermediate Administrative Structure."

Instruction Ray Page, and the School Problems Commission. McClure also suggested large--15,000 student minimum--regional districts and the elimination of the office of the County Superintendent of Schools as it was then known.<sup>43</sup>

Also in 1966, Gail L. Richardson created guidelines for the establishment of an educational cooperative service unit system in Illinois. He felt many school districts in Illinois were too small to meet their own educational needs and they should join together in cooperative educational units for greater economy and more efficient use of services and programs.<sup>44</sup>

Following recommendations of the Illinois Association of County Superintendents of Schools Image Committee, the Illinois General Assembly in 1969 passed House Bills 1470, 1471, and 1472 which effectively abolished the office of the County Superintendent of Schools and provided for the establishment of Educational Service Regions. No provisions were made in this legislation, however, for the clarification or update of services, duties, or responsibilities.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Dr. William P. McClure, Education for the Future of Illinois: A Report of the Task Force on Education (Springfield, Ill.: Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1966).

<sup>44</sup>Gail Lee Richardson, "Criteria for Establishing Guidelines for an Educational Cooperative Service Unit in the State of Illinois" (Ed.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1966).

<sup>45</sup>"Educational Service Region . . . Briefing Book."

In 1972 the Governor's Commission on Schools gave its highest priority to a recommendation that the number of Educational Service Regions be reduced from 102 to twelve for economical and efficient operation of the state's educational programs.<sup>46</sup>

Ralph Woolard directed a study in 1973 which produced a model structure for an "ideal" Educational Service Region. As was true of several earlier studies, Woolard suggested an elected board which would then appoint the chief administrative officer. The ESR board and the administrative officer(s) would work under the direct control and supervision of the State Board of Education.<sup>47</sup>

Also in 1973, Kenneth Hoffman also recommended an elected board with an appointed superintendent, but he pushed for a considerably larger intermediate unit--20,000 to 50,000 students.<sup>48</sup>

Paul Quinlan's 1975 proposal had a slightly different approach from his predecessors in that he suggested a board which would be selected from members of local school

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<sup>46</sup>Governor's Commission on Schools: Business Management Task Force Survey and Recommendations (Springfield, Ill.: Public Education Management Survey, Inc., 1972).

<sup>47</sup>Ralph Woolard, "A State Plan for the Development of Educational Service Regions," Regional Education Service Center Project, Pontiac, Illinois, 1973. (Photocopied.)

<sup>48</sup>Kenneth E. Hoffman, "Analysis of Needs and Services of Intermediate Districts in the State of Illinois" (Ph.D. dissertation, Miami University, 1973).



districts, with the purpose being the maintenance of local control of education.<sup>49</sup>

Another major McClure study was conducted for the Illinois School Problems Commission in 1976.

Again he recommended that all multi-district programs be brought together in a "unified intermediate district" and that this district be governed cooperatively by local boards of education. The reasoning was essentially the same--that if local school districts will not consolidate then a compromise of some kind must be worked out which achieves the principle effects of consolidation. The cooperative unified intermediate district would function as an integral extension of local school districts. To accomplish this integration the unified intermediate (district) would have a board consisting of one or more representatives chosen by each local district board on a basis proportional to school population. In addition, the regional unit would have an advisory council made up of seven to twelve local district superintendents chosen by the intermediate unit board on some rotational plan.

Along with others, McClure assumed that the purposes of the intermediate unit should be congruent with those of local school districts. As a result he advocated that the services of the new unified intermediate unit be those needed and wanted by the local school districts. A logical deduction from this clear purpose was that an efficient governance structure would provide maximum local district control of the unit.<sup>50</sup>

Donald Bonniwell's 1976 report to the Illinois Task Force on Governmental Reorganization suggested two possible alternatives for control of Educational Service Regions:

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<sup>49</sup>Paul Eugene Quinlan, "A Study of the Intermediate Administrative School District Leading to Some Questions for Change in Illinois" (Ed.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1975).

<sup>50</sup>David O. Coopridner, "The Control and Governance Structure of the Educational Service Region in Illinois" (Ed.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1981), pp. 23-24.

(1) eliminate the elected office of ESR Superintendent and replace it with branch offices of the State Department of Education or (2) establish substate regions under the control of a popularly elected board which would then appoint the chief administrative officer.<sup>51</sup>

In his 1977 study, E. Robert Stephens proposed the establishment of twenty to thirty Educational Service Regions, each controlled by nine- to thirteen-member boards elected from local school district boards; the ESR board would then appoint the chief administrative officer. The ESR budget would be reviewed by an advisory council comprised of local school district superintendents.<sup>52</sup>

Donald F. Muirhead, writing for the Illinois State Board of Education in 1980 stated:

To accomplish these three objectives--i.e., the clarification and reform of the functions of the Educational Service Regions, the streamlining of the present system of multiple intermediate service units, and the decentralization of state service to local districts the Board recommends that:

1. The Educational Service Regions be designated in law and in policy as the primary intermediate educational structure in Illinois;
2. The statutory authority and responsibility of the Educational Service Region be expanded to make

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<sup>51</sup>Donald R. Bonniwell, "Orderly Government: Organizing for Manageability," a report of the Illinois Task Force on Governmental Reorganization, Springfield, Illinois, 1976. (Photocopied.)

<sup>52</sup>E. Robert Stephens, "A Proposal for the Improvement of the Illinois Delivery System of Elementary, Secondary, and Adult Education," a report of the Regional Services Planning Committee, Illinois Office of Education, Springfield, Illinois, 1977. (Photocopied.)

- possible the administration of educational services now provided by other entities;
3. The Educational Service Region be authorized to administer programs directly to students upon request or approval of the constituent local districts;
  4. The State Board of Education be authorized to delegate responsibilities to the Educational Service Region and the Educational Service Region be authorized to administer such delegated responsibilities;
  5. Educational Service Region responsibilities which are obsolete or inappropriate be deleted from the law or reassigned to other structures.<sup>53</sup>

### McLean County History of the Office

The first school in the area which was to become McLean County was opened in 1825 by Miss Delilah Mullins in the private home of Mr. John W. Dawson.<sup>54</sup> On December 25, 1980, McLean County was incorporated by act of the State Legislature, and the county seat was located in Bloomington on April 21, 1831.<sup>55</sup> In 1831 W. H. Hodge started teaching in the first school in the new village of Bloomington.<sup>56</sup> Most of the schools in the area were subscription schools set up by newcomers from the east, but the subscription

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<sup>53</sup>Donald F. Muirhead, The Future of Educational Service Regions in Illinois (Springfield, Ill.: Illinois State Board of Education, 1980), pp. 4-5.

<sup>54</sup>Ezra M. Prince and John H. Burnham, eds., Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of McLean County, 2 vols. (Chicago: Munsell Publishing Company, 1908), 2:767.

<sup>55</sup>Brigham, Story of McLean County, p. 50.

<sup>56</sup>Prince and Burnham, History of McLean County, 2:767.

schools were closed in 1855 when a new school law provided taxes for the support of free public schools.

The free school law of 1855 provided for organization of school districts by townships and empowered elected school board directors to levy taxes for building school houses and hiring teachers. State law and state aid with accompanying minimum standards to qualify for state funds provided the motivation for establishing and improving public schools in McLean County.<sup>57</sup>

As a result of this law, five new school districts were organized in Bloomington:

In 1857 the state of Illinois granted a special school charter to the City of Bloomington, establishing a seven-member board of education. . . . Thus the five city districts were consolidated under one school board which voted to add four new buildings at an estimated cost of \$12,000. However, the City Council refused to approve the school levy on the grounds that it would be burdensome to the taxpayers. Abraham Lincoln was engaged by the Board of Education as counsel to take action in the courts to compel approval of the levy. The Council then decided to reconsider the matter and the building levy was eventually approved. . . . The fall of 1857 saw establishment of the first public high school on the second floor of the old Wilkens' Seminary.<sup>58</sup>

In 1872 the State Legislature made the first yearly appropriation of one million dollars for the State School Fund, and since 1889 all or part of the salary of the County Superintendent of Schools has been paid from that fund.<sup>59</sup>

In 1885 John A. Miller, then County Superintendent of McLean

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<sup>57</sup>H. Clay Tate, The Way It Was in McLean County 1972-1822 (Bloomington, Ill.: McLean County History '72 Association, 1972), p. 202.

<sup>58</sup>Brigham, Story of McLean County, pp. 42-43.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 80.

County Schools, issued the first course of study for rural and village schools, a publication which outlined a definite program and plan of promotion for pupils. The county office issued monthly examinations on the work outlined and final tests were given to upper grade pupils to determine their fitness for an elementary diploma to begin life's work or enter a high school.<sup>60</sup>

In 1895 County Superintendent of Schools John S. Wren called a conference of township directors to discuss a uniform county book list to be submitted to the many rural and village districts for their adoption. This plan was approved, and, with the exception of a few larger towns, the list recommended by the County Superintendent has been followed.<sup>61</sup>

In 1917 the State Legislature passed a Sanitation Law, "requiring the County Superintendent of Schools to order certain funds withheld from districts that failed to meet requirements for a standard school."<sup>62</sup> Using this law as a lever, the County Superintendent soon brought all schools in McLean County up to recognized standards.

Beginning in the 1940s McLean County led the State in merging of one-room schools into unit districts. Some of these units later found it desirable to join others in still larger districts. All rural children and an increasing number of urban children rode publicly-financed buses to and from school in this era. Hot lunches were made available at modest cost, thanks to federal subsidies.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 81.    <sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Tate, The Way It Was, p. x.

In 1967 the County Superintendent's office at Bloomington became responsible for supervision of the administration of the new Area Secondary Vocational Center, serving children from all parts of the county and some from outside the county. In 1968 the Tri-County Special Education Association was added to the Regional Office's list of responsibilities.

By legislative action in 1969, the name but not the function of the County Superintendent of Schools was changed to Superintendent of Educational Service Region. Closing of the one-room schools, however, had shifted the emphasis of the office over the years. State and federal funds flowing to the schools and record keeping occupied much of the time of the superintendent and his staff.<sup>64</sup>

In 1979, as part of the statewide reorganization of the Educational Service Region structure in Illinois, the Regional Offices of McLean and DeWitt Counties merged into one office located in Bloomington, Illinois.

#### Present Status of the Office

The next several pages provide an up-to-date description of the Regional Office of Education, the Regional Superintendent, his or her Assistant Regional Superintendent--all in Illinois--and their qualifications, powers, and responsibilities as outlined in the 1979 "Educational Service Region Study Commission Briefing Book."

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., pp. 217-18.

Structure and Regional Characteristics--There are currently fifty-seven Educational Service Regions in Illinois. These regions are based on county rather than district lines and have a minimum population of 33,000, except where three or more counties have combined, and are exempted from further consolidation. All districts in the state are included in an Educational Service Region.

Provision exists in the School Code for the disconnection of a county from a multi-county Educational Service Region; however, no region involved in the disconnection may contain less than 33,000 inhabitants after such disconnection is effected (again, except where the region after disconnection contains an area that was formed from the consolidation of three or more regions).

The chief administrative officer of the Educational Service Region is the Regional Superintendent, who works in affiliation with two other intermediate level structures: the County Board of each county within the region and the Regional Board of Trustees. In Cook County, the Regional Superintendent works with township trustees rather than a single Regional board.

The Regional Superintendent is authorized to appoint one or more Assistant Regional Superintendents. The first Assistant Superintendent will be paid from state funds; appointment of subsequent Assistants requires approval and funding from the County Board. Again, Cook County is an exception to this statute; there, the state funds eleven Assistant Superintendents.

The Educational Service Region is financed from multiple sources. The salaries of the Regional Superintendent and the first Assistant Regional Superintendent are paid by the state, which also provides an annual \$1,000 "supervisory expense fund" for each region. The cost to the state for these statutory expenditures was \$3,894,022 in FY 79 and \$3,457,000 for the current fiscal year. (The decrease in the number of regional administrators was somewhat offset by the recent salary increase for those now in office). The County Board of each county in the region participates in funding approved secretarial and other costs necessary to the operation of the office, and provides (or provides for) office space and utilities. The amount of such support per county is in the proportion that the equalized and assessed value of all taxable property

in the county bears to the total and equalized and assessed value of all taxable property in the region.

Each Regional Superintendent is authorized to collect specified fees for the issuance and registration of certificates and to use this "Institute Fund" for the provision of workshops, professional meetings, etc. Similarly, the Regional Superintendent is authorized to collect a fee for issuance of school bus driver permits and to use such fees for the provision of statutorily required bus driver training. Educational Service Regions may receive support through competitive state and federal grants, local district participation in a cooperative program, and/or state funding of special administrative activities.

Regional Superintendent--The chief administrative officer of an Educational Service Region is the Regional Superintendent. This office is established and prescribed by statute, primarily in Article 3 of the School Code.

Requirements/Qualifications for Office

1. Of good character
2. Master's degree
3. At least twenty semester hours in professional education at the graduate level
4. A valid all-grade supervisory certificate or valid state limited supervisory certificate or valid administrative certificate with superintendent endorsement
5. At least four years' teaching experience
6. Engaged for at least two of the previous four years in full-time teaching or supervising in the common public schools or serving as a county or regional superintendent

Method of Selection--The Regional Superintendent is an elected officer, selected from a partisan slate for a four-year term. Regional Superintendents currently in office were elected in November, 1978, and took office on August 6, 1979.

Administrative Identification--Identifying the precise administrative relationships of the Regional Superintendent presents a number of difficulties:

1. The duties, responsibilities, and compensation of the office are determined by the State Legislature.



2. Selection for office is by vote of the citizens of the Region, and all duties and responsibilities are performed within that geographic area.
3. The Regional Superintendent is paid from state funds, by checks approved and dispersed by the state education agency.
4. By statute, the Regional Superintendent is eligible to participate in and receive benefits from the state group insurance program and teacher retirement program.
5. The Regional Superintendent is not statutorily subject to the personnel policies of either the state or the county(ies).
6. The Regional Superintendent can be removed from office only by the County Board; however, the State Superintendent can withhold the Regional Superintendent's salary for failure to submit required statutory reports.
7. The Department of Labor has denied requests for unemployment compensation from Regional Superintendents whose areas were consolidated. Although the basis for this denial was the elective status of the office, similar compensation has been denied to several appointed Assistant Regional Superintendents.
8. The County Boards have routinely denied Workman's Compensation claims submitted by Regional Superintendents, asserting that they are not county employees. Workman's Compensation claims submitted by Regional Superintendents have been honored by the state until recently, when a question was raised regarding whether the Regional Superintendent is actually a state employee. An opinion on this issue has been requested from the Attorney General.
9. "Early retirement" provisions of a recent law raise questions about the employment unit in which the Regional Superintendent(s) will be counted and, in the event of the early retirement of a Regional Superintendent, about who will be responsible for the employer's payment to the retirement system.

At present, the Regional Superintendent seems not to be clearly a state employee or a county employee.

Powers and Duties--The powers and duties of the Regional Superintendent are extensively detailed in the statutes; the following list indicates major responsibilities, but should not be considered exhaustive.

<u>Powers and Duties</u>	<u>School Art.</u>	<u>Code Sec.</u>
Distribute State Funds	3	9
Advise on controversial school issues	3	10
Assume responsibility relative to holding institutes or in-service workshops	3	11;12;14.8;14.9;27.15
Supervise and control school districts	3	14.2
Visit each school during the year	3	14.5
Direct and advise teachers and school officers	3	14.6;14.7
Inspect all building plans and schools	3	14.20;14.21;14.22
Keep text material available for inspection	3	14.10
Register certificates	21	16;17;18
Assume responsibility for suspension of certificates	21	23
Determine that all legal requirements of the curriculum are being met	27	1;2;3;4;5;6;7;8;10;12;12.1;13.1;14;15;21;23
Appoint a truant officer	3	13
Provide a high school equivalency certificate program	3	15.12
Direct cooperative educational programs	3	15.14
Issue school bus driver permits; provide in-service training for bus drivers	6	106.1 (Ch. 95½)
Issue employment certificates for minors under sixteen	48	31.10
Take a census of school districts	3	14.16;15.11
Keep a map of the county in his office showing school districts	3	14.18

<u>Powers and Duties</u>	<u>School Art.</u>	<u>Code Sec.</u>
Make a list of districts for treasurers	3	14.19
Assume responsibility for certain scholarships	3	14.4
Evaluate and file the school treasurer's bonds	3	8
Notify the districts of the monies sent to school treasurers	3	14.17
Examine school treasurer's books, accounts, vouchers	3	14.11;14.12
Sell township fund lands	3	14.3
Give notice of regular or special elections	3	14.13;14.14
File poll books and election returns	3	14.15
Remove school board members for wilful failure to perform official duties	3	15.5
Prepare office budget by October 1 each year	3	
Appoint, with approval of the County Board(s), one or more Assistant Superintendents	3	15.6
Report to the County Board(s)	3	5;6
Report, annually, to the State Board of Education	3	15.8

Compensation--The annual salary of the Regional Superintendent is set by statute and varies according to the population of the Region, as determined by the last preceding federal census. The following salary schedule became effective August 3, 1979.

<u>Population of Region</u>	<u>Annual Salary</u>
less than 48,000	\$31,000
48,000 to 99,999	\$35,500
100,000 to 999,999	\$39,000
1,000,000 and over	\$41,000

The salary of the Regional Superintendent is paid from the common school fund and is budgeted as a separate line item by the Illinois State Board of Education. County Boards may provide for additional compensation of the Regional Superintendent from the county treasury; only one county--Cook--is known to exercise this option.

The salary of the state funded Assistant Regional Superintendent is based on his/her qualifications and computed as a percentage of the salary of the Regional Superintendent to whom he is Assistant, as set forth on the following schedule:

Qualifications of Assistant Regional Superintendent	Percent of Salary of Regional Superin- tendent
No bachelor's degree but state certificate valid for teaching and supervising	55%
Bachelor's degree plus state certificate valid for super- vising	60%
Master's degree plus state certificate valid for super- vising	75%

Other Stipulations--The Regional Superintendent is required to take an oath of office and to be bonded with at least two sureties. Upon removal or resignation from office, the Superintendent must deliver to his/her successors in office, all monies, papers, and personal property belonging to the Educational Service Region office.<sup>65</sup>

### Summary

The information presented in this chapter offers the reader some insight into the development of the intermediate unit of school administration in general and of the Regional Office of Education in Illinois and McLean and DeWitt Counties in particular. It gives some indication of the past services provided by this office as well as those presently offered. It also points out some of the uncertainties which currently exist about the office; its

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<sup>65</sup>"Educational Service Region . . . Briefing Book," unpaginated.

powers, responsibilities, and services. Reorganization of the intermediate unit's state structure has now begun without a redefining or clarification of the duties to be performed by the Regional Office or the exact nature of its relationship to the local school districts it serves or to the State Office of Education to which it is responsible.

These points--and others--cannot easily be resolved. In the following chapter data will be presented and analyzed regarding these relationships, duties, and services. A subsequent chapter will draw conclusions and make recommendations based on the data presented.

## CHAPTER III

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### Introduction and Background Information

The major purpose for which this study was undertaken was to examine the relationships which exist between the Regional Office of Education for McLean and DeWitt Counties and selected local school districts which it serves, with emphasis on the services and responsibilities of the Regional Office and relationships with individual school districts.

This chapter offers a presentation and analysis of the data obtained as a result of this study. The methodology used to collect the data included the following:

1. A review of the literature was conducted to provide necessary background information for readers who are not familiar with the role or functions of Educational Service Regions so that the data presented can be better understood and to provide material necessary to make a comparison in the analysis of data between the existing relationship observed in this study and what the experts perceive that relationship should be.

2. The Illinois School Code was used to identify and define the major responsibilities of the Educational Service Region.
3. The superintendent of the Educational Service Region for McLean/DeWitt Counties was interviewed to obtain information and data regarding services, responsibilities, and relationships with local school districts.
4. A survey instrument was developed, field tested, and mailed to all secondary and unit school district superintendents in McLean and DeWitt Counties for the purpose of collecting data regarding their awareness and use of services offered by the Educational Service Region and the resulting relationships with that office.
5. Five of the eleven responding superintendents were selected for in-depth personal interviews to validate responses to the survey instrument, to ascertain what problems exist that affect their level of awareness or extent of utilization of the services offered by the Educational Service Region, and to seek suggestions for the improvement of the relationship between the Educational Service Region and the local school districts.

The entire process--and the major purpose--was to obtain as much factual information as possible to answer the nine major questions relative to the services, responsibilities, and relationships of the Educational Service Region for McLean/DeWitt Counties and the local school districts it serves. Those nine questions were presented in Chapter I of this dissertation and are repeated below.

1. What does The School Code of Illinois identify as the major responsibilities of the Educational Service Region? How are those responsibilities further broken down into groups such as services or requirements? Which of those responsibilities are mandated and which are discretionary?
2. How is the Educational Service Region organized to carry out the responsibilities identified by the Illinois School Code?
3. How is the Regional Office of Education funded in order to provide the staff, facilities, and equipment necessary to offer the services and fulfill the requirements established by the Illinois School Code?
4. What are the specific activities and services available from the Educational Service Region office which meet the identified responsibilities? Are those activities and services



sufficiently broad enough to meet the required responsibilities?

5. What evidence or documentation is available from the Regional Office of Education to show that it is actually conducting the services and activities required to meet its responsibilities as identified? Does any of this material indicate that the Educational Service Region has established its own priorities from among the responsibilities established by the Illinois School Code?
6. To what extent are the superintendents of local school districts aware of the major responsibilities and specific services available from the Educational Service Region? In instances where superintendents are not aware of the major responsibilities of the Regional Office of Education, what are the reasons for this lack of awareness?
7. To what extent are the superintendents of local school districts utilizing the services of the Educational Service Region as identified? Which services are most and least frequently utilized? In instances where services are infrequently utilized, what are the reasons for them not

being fully utilized? Are the local school district superintendents ever discouraged from using services provided by the Educational Service Region? If so, by whom or what?

8. To what extent do local school district superintendents and the superintendent of the Educational Service Region agree as to the awareness of the local school district superintendents and their utilization of services offered by the Educational Service Region?
9. What steps can be taken to improve the relationship between the Educational Service Region office and the local school districts? Does the Regional Office of Education have the authority to take these steps itself, or must the Illinois Office of Education increase the authority of the Educational Service Region to allow them to expand their services?

In presenting, analyzing, and drawing implications from the data gathered for this study, Chapter III is divided into ten major sections. The first section introduces the chapter and provides background information; each of the nine remaining sections corresponds to one of the nine questions presented in Chapter I and repeated here in the first section of this chapter. This division of the

chapter into ten sections is followed by the subdivision of each section into two or three subdivisions. If the information received in response to one of the nine major questions was collected as a result of both the survey instrument and the interview process, then three subdivisions were used to report and analyze the data. The first subdivision presents the data obtained by the questionnaire and/or the review of literature; the second subdivision presents the data obtained from the interview process; the third subdivision analyzes and draws implications from the data. If the data were only obtained from one source area--questionnaire, review of literature, interview process--the first subdivision reports the data obtained, and the second subdivision analyzes the data. Whenever possible, a visual presentation of the data is offered in tabular form with an accompanying explanation and analysis.

The original survey instrument was sent to five superintendents outside McLean and DeWitt Counties to be field tested. Three of those superintendents responded, and their comments and suggestions were used as a basis for re-writing parts of the instrument. The revised questionnaire was then mailed to all secondary and unit district superintendents in McLean and DeWitt Counties. Eleven of the sixteen superintendents responded to the mailed questionnaire. The data from the survey instrument were then

analyzed and interpreted along with the interview and review of literature material relative to the nine major questions.

### Question #1

Major question number one answered by this study includes the following analysis and interpretation.

Question #1--What does The School Code of Illinois identify as the major responsibilities of the Educational Service Region? How are those responsibilities further broken down into groups such as services or requirements? Which of those responsibilities are mandated and which are discretionary?

### Review of Literature Data

The School Code of Illinois does not break down the responsibilities of the Regional Superintendent into groupings such as services or activities. The Code does make two distinctions, however. It lists twenty-two responsibilities in Section 3-14 entitled "Duties of county superintendent," and it lists fourteen responsibilities in Section 3-15 entitled "Powers of county superintendent." This distinction is important because the term "duty" carries with it the connotation of an obligation or requirement, whereas power implies authority, influence, or force and the choice of using such authority. Thus, the

following responsibilities of the Regional Superintendent are listed as duties and are therefore mandated:

3-14.1 New bond. To execute, upon notice by the county board, a new bond, conditioned and approved as the first bond.

3-14.2 Supervision and control of school districts. The county superintendent of schools shall exercise supervision and control over all school districts within the county. . . .

3-14.3 Township fund lands. To sell township fund lands, issue certificates of purchase, report to the county board and State Comptroller in the manner in Article 15 of this Act, and perform all other duties pertaining thereto.

3-14.4 Scholarships. To register the names of all applicants for scholarships to State controlled universities; to hold or cause to be held examinations therefore, and to perform such other duties as pertain thereto.

3-14.5 Visitation of public schools. To visit each public school in the county at least once a year, noting the methods of instruction, the branches taught, the textbooks used, and the discipline, government, and general condition of the schools.

3-14.6 Directions to teachers and school officers. To give teachers and school officers such directions in the science, art, and methods of teaching, and in regard to courses of study, as he deems expedient.

3-14.7 Official advisor and assistant of school officers and teachers. To act as the official advisor and assistant of the school officers and teachers in his county. In the performance of this duty he shall carry out the advice of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

3-14.8 Teachers' institute and other meetings. To conduct a teachers' institute, to aid and encourage the formation of other teachers' meetings, and to assist in their management.

3-14.9 Evaluation of standard of teaching--Improvement of schools. To labor in every practicable way to elevate the standard of teaching and improve the condition of the common schools of his county.

3-14.10 Text material available for inspection. To keep available for public inspection a list of all text

material used in any school subject to his jurisdiction, and to furnish such list to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and annual alterations of lists as they occur.

3-14.11 School treasurer's books, accounts, and vouchers. To examine at least once each year all books, accounts, and vouchers of every school treasurer in his county, and if he finds any irregularities in them, to report them at once, in writing, to the trustees in Class II county school units or to the respective school boards of the district in Class I county school units whose duty it shall be to take immediately such action as the case demands.

3-14.12 Examine evidences of indebtedness. To examine all notes, bonds, mortgages, and other evidences of indebtedness which the township or school treasurer holds officially, and if he finds that the papers are not in proper form or that the securities are insufficient, he shall so state, in writing, to the board of trustees.

3-14.13 Notice of election of trustees. To give notice of the election of trustees in such cases as are specified in Section 5-6.

3-14.14 Notice of regular or special elections. To give notice of any regular or special elections as required by this Act.

3-14.15 Poll books, returns, reports, statements. To file and keep all the poll books and returns of elections required to be returned to him and the reports and statements returned by school treasurers and trustees of schools.

3-14.16 Census. To take a special census of a school district when petitioned by 10 percent or 1,500 legal voters, whichever is less, to determine if such district has the proper type of school board, either of directors or a board of education, required by this Act. . . .

3-14.17 Notice of amount of money distributed. To notify presidents of boards of trustees and the clerks and secretaries of school districts, on or before September 30, annually, of the amount of money distributed by him to the school treasurer, with the date of distribution.

3-14.18 Map--Numbering of districts. To keep in his office a map of his county on a scale of not less than two inches to the mile and to indicate thereon the boundary lines and numbers of all school districts. Districts shall be numbered consecutively. . . .

3-14.19 Lists of districts to treasurers. To furnish the township treasurers a list of the districts in their respective townships with the consecutive numbers thereof.

3-14.20 Building plans and specifications. To inspect the plans and specifications for the heating, ventilating, lighting, seating, water supply, toilets, and safety against fire of public school rooms and buildings submitted to him by school boards, and to approve all those that comply substantially with the specifications prepared and published by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

3-14.21 Inspection of schools. To inspect all public schools under his supervision and notify the trustees of schools in writing before April 1, whether or not the several schools in their district have been kept as required by law and to survey buildings and temporary school facilities as prescribed by the State Board of Education and notify in writing each Board of Education in the county prior to September 1, of the adequacy and efficiency of all school district buildings and temporary school facilities to be used for classes.

3-14.22 Inspection of school Buildings. To request the Department of Public Health, the Department of Law Enforcement of the supervising architect to inspect public school buildings and temporary school facilities which appear to him to be unsafe, unsanitary, or unfit for occupancy. These officials shall inspect such buildings and temporary school facilities and if, in their opinion, such buildings or temporary facilities are unsafe, unsanitary, or unfit for occupancy, shall state in writing in what particular they are unsafe, unsanitary, or unfit for occupancy. Upon the receipt of such statement the regional superintendent shall condemn the building or temporary facility and notify the school board thereof in writing and the reasons for such condemnation. He shall also notify, in writing, the board of school trustees that the school or temporary facility so condemned is not kept as required by law. . . .<sup>1</sup>

The following responsibilities of the Regional Superintendent are listed as powers; items 3-15.1, 8, 9, 11,

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<sup>1</sup>State Board of Education, Illinois Office of Education, The School Code of Illinois 1979 (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing Company, 1979), pp. 11-13.

12, and 14 are worded in such a manner as to make them mandatory while the other items appear to be discretionary in nature.

3-15.1 Reports. To require the appointed school treasurer in Class II counties and the school district of Class I counties to prepare and forward to his office on or before October 15, annually, and at such other times as may be required by him or by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, a statement exhibiting the financial condition of the school for the preceding year commencing on July 1 and ending June 30. . . .

3-15.2 Recommending remission of penalty. To recommend to the Superintendent of Public Instruction the remission of the penalty provided for a failure of the trustees of schools to make the report required by law.

3-15.3 School treasurer's accounts. To direct in what manner school treasurers shall keep their books and accounts.

3-15.4 Suit against county collector. To bring suit against the county collector for failure to pay the amount due upon the auditor's warrant.

3-15.5 Removal of school board members. To remove any member of a school board from office for wilful failure to perform his official duties.

3-15.6 Assistants. To employ, with the approval of the county board, such assistants as he needs for the discharge of his duties. Such assistants shall be persons versed in the principles and methods of education, familiar with public school work, and competent to visit schools.

3-15.7 Maps and records of new districts. To demand of the trustees of schools certified copies of maps and records of school districts as organized. In case of discrepancies or defects in defining the boundaries of school districts the county superintendent, or in case of a district lying in two or more counties, the county superintendents of such counties acting jointly, may define such boundaries in conformity with what appears to have been the intention of the trustees of schools when such boundaries were established.

3-15.8 Report to Superintendent of Public Instruction. On or before August 15, annually, to present to the Superintendent of Public Instruction such information relating to schools in his county as the Superintendent of Public Instruction may require.



3-15.9 Delivery of money, books, papers, and property to successor. Upon his removal or resignation, or at the expiration of his term of office, or in case of his death, his representatives to deliver to his successor in office, on demand, all moneys, books, papers, and personal property belonging to his office or subject to his control or disposition.

3-15.10 Assistant county or regional superintendent. To employ, in counties or regions of 2,000,000 inhabitants or less, in addition to any assistants authorized to be employed with the approval of the county board, an assistant county or regional superintendent of schools who shall be a person of good attainment, versed in the principles and methods of education, and qualified to teach and supervise schools under Article 21 of this Act; to fix the term of such assistant and direct his work and define his duties. . . .

3-15.11 Census for special education and report. To take before March 1 of each year pursuant to the rules and regulations issued by the State Superintendent of Education through the school districts a census of all school children age three through twenty-one years of age inclusive of the types described, except as to age, in Sections 14-1.02 through 14-1.07 who were receiving special education and related services on October 1 and February 1 of the current school year. . . .

3-15.12 High school equivalency testing program. The regional superintendent of schools shall make available for qualified individuals residing within the region a High School Equivalency Testing Program. For that purpose the regional superintendent alone or with other regional superintendents may establish and supervise a testing center or centers to administer the secured forms of the high school level Test of General Educational Development to qualified persons. Such centers shall be under the supervision of the regional superintendent in whose region such centers are located, subject to the approval of the State Superintendent of Education. . . .

3-15.13 Repealed.

3-15.14 Cooperative Educational Programs. To administer and direct a cooperative or joint educational program or project when two or more districts request and authorize him to provide and administer these services. He may provide and contract for the staff, space, necessary materials, supplies, books, and apparatus for such agreements. The school boards of the respective districts shall pay to the regional superintendent the

pro rata share of the expenses of the operation of such programs, and the regional superintendent shall use such funds in payment of such operational expenses. . . .<sup>2</sup>

The 1979 "Educational Service Region Study Commission Briefing Book" distributed by the Illinois State Board of Education provides a detailed list of the powers and duties of the Regional Superintendent. While an extensive list of the major responsibilities of the Regional Superintendent is presented, it should not be considered exhaustive. This list does provide, however, an indication of the very large number of areas in which the Regional Superintendent must be knowledgeable and to which he must allocate some portion of his time.

<u>Powers and Duties</u>	<u>School Art.</u>	<u>Code Sec.</u>
Distribute state funds	3	9
Advise on controversial school issues	3	10
Assume responsibility relative to holding institutes or in-service workshops	3	11;12;14.8; 14.9;27.15
Supervise and control school districts	3	14.2
Visit each school during the year	3	14.5
Direct and advise teachers and school officers	3	14.6;14.7
Inspect all building plans and schools	3	14.20; 14.21;14.22
Keep text material available for inspection	3	14.10
Register certificates	21	16;17;18
Assume responsibility for suspension of certificates	21	23

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 13-15.

<u>Powers and Duties</u>	<u>School Art.</u>	<u>Code Sec.</u>
Determine that all legal requirements of the curriculum are being met	27	1;2;3;4;5; 6;7;8;10; 12;12.1; 13.1;14.1; 15;21;23
Appoint a truant officer	3	13
Provide a high school equivalency certificate program	3	15.12
Direct cooperative educational programs	3	15.14
Issue school bus driver permits; provide in-service training for bus drivers	6	106.1 (Ch. 95½)
Issue employment certificates for minors under sixteen	48	31.10
Take a census of school districts	3	14.16;15.11
Keep a map of the county in his office showing school districts	3	14.18
Make a list of districts for treasurers	3	14.19
Assume responsibility for certain scholarships	3	14.4
Evaluate and file the school treasurer's bonds	3	8
Notify the districts of the monies sent to school treasurers	3	14.17
Examine school treasurer's books, accounts, vouchers	3	14.11;14.12
Sell township fund lands	3	14.3
Give notice of regular or special elections	3	14.13;14.14
File poll books and election returns	3	14.15
Remove school board members for wilful failure to perform official duties	3	15.5
Prepare official budget by October 1 each year	3	
Appoint, with approval of the County Board(s), one or more Assistant Superintendents	3	15.6
Report to the County Board(s)	3	5;6

Powers and Duties

School	Code
Art.	Sec.

Report, annually, to the State  
Board of Education

3	15.8 <sup>3</sup>
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Analysis and Implications of Data

The initial impression received when reading the list of responsibilities and duties of the Educational Service Region was that the list was overwhelming. Certainly no one person could keep track of or perform every one of the functions listed. Upon closer study, however, several points became obvious: (1) not all of the responsibilities listed are mandatory, (2) not all of the responsibilities listed must be performed on a regular or even an annual basis, and (3) many of the responsibilities are of a clerical nature which could be handled by subordinate personnel under the supervision of the Regional Superintendent. What this analysis means, then, is that the responsibilities of the Educational Service Region, as established by the Illinois School Code, can adequately be accomplished if they are handled in a systematic, organized, and business-like manner. The satisfactory performance of the designated responsibilities and duties can be further enhanced by the judicious use of discretionary powers and the delegation of authority by the Regional Superintendent.

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<sup>3</sup>"Educational Service Region Study Commission Briefing Book," a study by the Illinois State Board of Education, Springfield, Illinois, 1979, unpaginated. (Photocopied.)

## Question #2

Major question number two answered by this study includes the following analysis and interpretation.

Question #2--How is the Educational Service Region organized to carry out the responsibilities identified by the Illinois School Code?

### Interview Data

The organizational structure for the Educational Service Region for McLean and DeWitt Counties is composed of six people, each of whom has special areas of responsibilities and cross-training to assist and check each other. The line and staff relationships of this office are demonstrated in Figure 1.

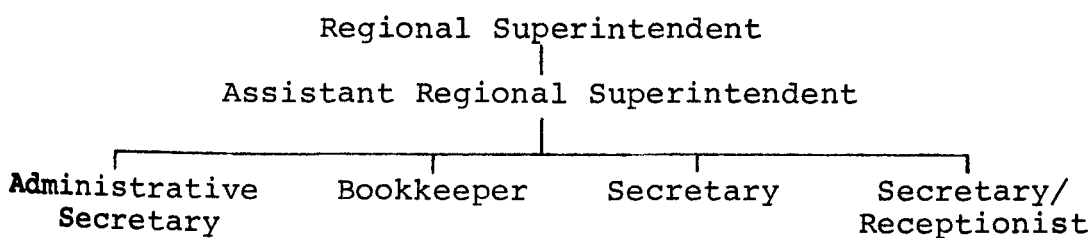


Figure 1. Organizational Chart for McLean/DeWitt ROE

A brief description of each of these people, their qualifications and experience, and their office responsibilities follows; when each of the individual descriptions is considered as a part of the total office structure, a

better picture is provided of how this particular Regional Office of Education is organized to perform its assigned responsibilities and duties.

The present Regional Superintendent was an educational advisor to the First Army for two years, a counselor and teacher for three and one-half years, a building administrator for ten years, and a central office administrator for six years prior to being elected to this position six years ago. While he generally supervises the overall operations of the office, he personally works with the Illinois Office of Education and the State Superintendent of Education; he oversees the receipt and disbursement of all monies; he handles building condemnations and all other difficult legal matters; as secretary, by law, of the Regional Board of Trustees he records all the Board's business; he handles the building review portion of all state visitation teams; and he prepares an annual report on the finances and operations of his office to present to the State Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Education.

The Assistant Regional Superintendent was a teacher and coach for eight years and a building administrator for fourteen years before assuming his present position ten years ago. While working with and under the direct supervision of the Regional Superintendent, he is responsible for

the operation of the office in the absence of the superintendent. The Assistant Regional Superintendent handles the educational unit of local school districts for the state visitation teams; he is the truant officer and works with the State's Attorney on truancy matters; he is authorized to sign checks and oversee the receipt and disbursement of monies; and he is the liaison person for the local school districts.

The administrative secretary had a family background in education with her husband having been an educator, administrator, and has now been a local district superintendent for many years; she had worked for a federal educational funding program prior to coming to this office, and she has been in her present position for twelve years. While directly responsible to both the Regional Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent, she generally is responsible for the daily operation of the office. Her areas of specialization and primary responsibilities are: answering teacher certification questions; filing legal opinions; handling major correspondence; maintaining files for buildings and facilities; and maintaining files for all life safety work.

The bookkeeper had experience and educational preparation in accounting and bookkeeping prior to coming to this office two years ago. Working under the supervision of

both administrators, she is primarily responsible for all accounting and bookkeeping functions. She prepares all financial reports; handles all funds or monies received or distributed by the office; prepares all checks; maintains all financial files--federal funds, state aid, GED funds, and in-service monies, to name a few.

The office secretary began as a senior high school student in an Office Occupations program; she was then hired one year ago to continue the work she had learned the previous year. She has general secretarial duties, and her primary responsibilities include: compiling all records of cooperative purchases made by and for the Region's local school districts; keeping records of all teacher certifications in the Region; training as a computer operator/programmer for the office; handling the telephone switchboard and the office counter as necessary; and serving as a cross-check for money distribution from the office.

The secretary/receptionist has been with the office for one year and is primarily responsible for operating the switchboard and working at the counter. Her other areas of specialization include working with all transportation and school bus driver records; maintaining all General Educational Development correspondence and files; recording summaries of all transportation hearings; and serving as a third cross-check for money distribution from the office.



### Analysis and Implications of Data

When one person is responsible for the hiring and supervision of a small group of people, there are often common characteristics which can be observed in each individual, and the staff of the Regional Office of Education for McLean and DeWitt Counties is no exception. The staff tends to be a well-trained, responsible, and competent group which works well together and which makes every effort to respond to a question or need of a district.

The office is well organized, with each person having clearly defined responsibilities and duties. Yet, the Regional Superintendent has placed a heavy emphasis on cross-training the staff so that everyone is capable of pitching in on a job during times of need or the absence of an individual. The responsibilities assigned to the Regional Office of Education by the Illinois School Code have been relatively evenly distributed among the office staff members who are closely monitored by the Regional Superintendent and his Assistant Superintendent. Any problems or mistakes which may occur are shouldered by the Regional Superintendent because he has the final check and authority for everything which goes out of the office.

If there is a need or an area of responsibility which is not being met by this office, it lies in the area of curriculum development and supervision. While both the

Regional Superintendent and his Assistant are experienced and fully qualified administrators, neither of them believes that he has the experience or preparation to meet the curriculum needs of the local school districts they serve. This is not to say that the Regional Office of Education for McLean/DeWitt Counties is not meeting its requirements as stated in the Illinois School Code, but, rather, that the administrators of the Regional Office believe they are not doing enough in this area. They believe that there is a definite need for a curriculum specialist to be a part of the Regional Office of Education for McLean and DeWitt Counties. During the interview, the Regional Superintendent expressed the view that curriculum matters are of such major importance, so time-consuming and ever-changing, that a curriculum specialist would be beneficial. This admission of inadequacy should not be viewed as a negative indictment of the Regional Superintendent but rather should be viewed as an honest expression that services can always be improved.

### Question #3

Major question number three answered by this study includes the following analysis and interpretation.

Question #3--How is the Regional Office of Education funded in order to provide the staff, facilities, and equipment necessary to offer the services and

fulfill the requirements established by the Illinois School Code?

### Review of Literature Data

The "Educational Service Region Study Commission Briefing Book" provided a clear picture of how a Regional Office of Education is funded.

The Educational Service Region is financed from multiple sources. The salaries of the Regional Superintendent and the first Assistant Regional Superintendent are paid by the State, which also provides an annual \$1,000 "supervisory expense fund" for each region. The cost to the State for these statutory expenditures was \$3,894,022 in FY 79 and \$3,457,000 for the current fiscal year. (The decrease in the number of regional administrators was somewhat offset by the recent salary increases for those now in office). The County Board of each county in the region participates in funding approved secretarial and other costs necessary to the operation of the office, and provides (or provides for) office space and utilities. The amount of such support per county is in the proportion that the equalized and assessed value of all taxable property in the county bears to the total and equalized and assessed value of all taxable property in the region.

Each Regional Superintendent is authorized to collect specified fees for the issuance and registration of certificates and to use this "Institute Fund" for the provision of workshops, professional meetings, etc. Similarly, the Regional Superintendent is authorized to collect a fee for issuance of school bus driver permits and to use such fees for the provision of statutorily required bus driver training. Educational Service Regions may receive support through competitive state and federal grants, local district participation in a cooperative program, and/or state funding of special administrative activities.<sup>4</sup>

### Interview Data

The information obtained during the interview of the Regional Superintendent of Education for McLean/DeWitt

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

Counties corroborated the data acquired by the review of literature. The salaries of the Superintendents of Educational Service Regions are established by the state legislature and are based entirely upon the size of the district he or she serves. The salary schedule which became effective on August 3, 1979 is shown in Figure 2.

<u>Population of Region</u>	<u>Annual Salary</u>
less than 48,000	\$31,000
48,000 to 99,999	35,500
100,000 to 999,999	39,000
1,000,000 and over	41,000

Figure 2. Salaries of Educational Service Region Superintendents

Thus, with a total population of over 141,000 people in McLean and DeWitt Counties, the Regional Superintendent's salary is \$39,000.

The salaries of the first Assistant Regional Superintendents of Educational Service Regions are also established by the state legislature and are based upon the salary of the Regional Superintendent and the qualifications of the Assistant as outlined in Figure 3. Thus, with the proper degree and certification, and the Regional Superintendent's salary of \$39,000, the Assistant Regional Superintendent for McLean/DeWitt Counties has a salary of \$29,250.

<u>Qualifications of Assistant Regional Superintendent</u>	<u>Percent of Salary of Regional Superintendent</u>
No bachelor's degree but state certificate valid for teaching and supervising	55%
Bachelor's degree plus state certificate valid for superivising	60%
Master's degree plus state certificate valid for supervising	75%

Figure 3. Salaries of Assistant Regional Superintendents

Funds for the operating expenditures of the Regional Office of Education come from the General Revenue funds of McLean and DeWitt Counties. The amount of money contributed by each county is based upon the equalized assessed valuation of that county in proportion to the total equalized assessed valuation of the Region. The McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education had a 1980 operating expense budget of about \$55,000, with approximately 80 percent of that figure coming from McLean County and 20 percent from DeWitt County.

In addition to the actual money it receives for operating expenses, McLean County also provides the Regional Office of Education with office space in the County Courthouse, and the County pays for the electricity, heating, and water used by the Regional Office. The Regional

Superintendent is accountable to the County Board of Trustees for the operating expenses of his office, and he must present a budget to it for its approval once each year.

Beyond the expenses of the daily operations of the office, the Regional Office of Education is responsible for the receipt and disbursement of federal and state monies to local school districts. It also collects fees for the administration of the General Educational Development test, for the issuance of school bus driver permits, for the registration and renewal of teaching certificates, and for the registration of local districts in the film library cooperative. These fees are then used to provide institutes, training, and services to the local districts as required by the Illinois School Code.

#### Analysis and Implications of Data

Not having enough money is a common complaint, and the Regional Office of Education for McLean/DeWitt Counties is no exception. When one considers the extensive list of responsibilities and duties the Regional Office of Education is required to perform, the complaint seems justified.

One significant encumbrance which the Educational Service Region must endure is that it cannot receive state funds for its own use because the state does not recognize a Regional Office of Education as an LEA (Local Education Agency). This denial of recognition effectively prevents

the Regional Office from receiving funds which it could use to improve and expand its services.

Another burden which the Educational Service Region must bear is the importance--or lack of it--with which education is viewed by the very governmental agencies which supply its funds and with which the Regional Office of Education must cooperate. If the various agencies continue to try to shift responsibility for funding the operations of the Educational Service Region to other agencies, if funding of the operations of the Regional Office of Education continues to receive low priority by the County Board of Trustees, and if the present economic spiral continues without additional sources of funding being found, then the future of the Regional Office of Education is bleak indeed. Since space and utilities are provided free of cost and since administrative salaries are set by state law, the office of the Educational Service Region will probably be able to maintain status quo. However, an expansion of services to fully carry out the mandates of the School Code can not realistically be realized with the present level of funding. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the Regional Office of Education will be able to continue to attract and/or keep highly qualified candidates for the office of Regional Superintendent if provisions are not made to have

the Regional Superintendent's salary keep pace with inflation and the salaries of other local school district superintendents.

#### Question #4

Major question number four answered by this study includes the following analysis and interpretation.

Question #4--What are the specific activities and services available from the Educational Service Region office which meet the identified responsibilities? Are those activities and services sufficiently broad enough to meet the required responsibilities?

#### Interview Data

The powers, duties, and responsibilities as listed on pages 72-77 of this chapter comprise or account for the activities and services available from the Educational Service Region office for McLean/DeWitt Counties. Many of the responsibilities, which lead to various activities or services, are archaic in terms of today's educational structure and needs, and other responsibilities lead to services which are rarely needed and infrequently utilized. Examples of archaic and infrequently utilized services include: sell township fund lands, make a list of districts for treasurers, remove school board members for wilful



failure to perform official duties, and file poll books and election returns.

As the Regional Superintendent explained in the interview, many of the services or activities are of a routine nature and are actually performed by office personnel working under minimal supervision by the Regional Superintendent or his Assistant. The summaries of the Regional Office personnel and their duties, as enumerated on pages 80-83 of this chapter, provide an indication of how extensively the various activities and services are handled by office personnel. Still other services are provided by "outside" groups under the auspices of the Regional Office of Education. For example, the testing and proctoring of the General Educational Development test is provided by the Retired Teachers Association which serves the area.

It should also be noted that the Regional Office of Education Superintendents have their own organization which is reviewing the list of duties and responsibilities as identified by The School Code of Illinois with the purpose of stimulating legislation that would serve to modernize and streamline the Regional Superintendent's responsibilities and duties.

#### Analysis and Implications of Data

From all outward indications, the Regional Office of Education for McLean/DeWitt Counties is providing all the

activities and services required of that office by The School Code of Illinois. Proper utilization by the Regional Superintendent of available office personnel and resource groups helps him accomplish what would otherwise be a difficult task for one or two people to perform. As to the extent of the services actually being performed, no evidence has been discovered through review of literature, personal contact, and/or interview to indicate that the services or activities offered by the McLean/DeWitt Educational Service Region are less than adequate in terms of Illinois School Code requirements. In the area of curriculum services, however, the requirements are being met minimally, as evidenced by the infrequent utilization of such services as: responsible for institutes or in-service workshops, visit each school once a year, and see that all legal curriculum requirements are met. A curriculum specialist could be of invaluable help in providing more complete services to the local districts. Further evidence of the nature and extent of the activities and services performed by this Regional Office of Education can be obtained by reading through Appendix C which is part of the annual report prepared by the Regional Superintendent for the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Superintendent of Schools. Although the requirements of the School Code are being met, there are degrees of compliance and, hopefully, an

Educational Service Region would go beyond the basic mandate. It would appear, as mentioned earlier, that the funding process and level of funding will most likely inhibit any real growth on the part of the Educational Service Region.

#### Question #5

Major question number five answered by this study includes the following analysis and interpretation.

Question #5--What evidence or documentation is available from the Regional Office of Education to show that it is actually conducting the services and activities required to meet its responsibilities as identified? Does any of this material indicate that the Educational Service Region has established its own priorities from among the responsibilities established by the Illinois School Code?

#### Interview Data

There is ample evidence and documentation available from the McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education which demonstrates that this office is actually performing the activities and services required of it to meet its responsibilities as identified by the Illinois School Code.

When a person walks into the office a very large map of the region is readily apparent on the wall behind one of

the secretaries. This map depicts the region as it was prior to the recent consolidation of regional offices, and it is in the process of being redrawn to detail all of the school districts in both McLean and DeWitt Counties. The administrative secretary maintains the office master calendar of all activities, visits, and reports prepared by the Regional Office or its staff; she also keeps a check sheet of all the required responsibilities of the office and their respective due dates to make sure that they are accomplished. Among the records accumulated by the administrative secretary were the following: held monthly meetings for McLean and DeWitt County educational administrators; sponsored the annual Midstate Reading Conference for the twenty-third year; administered the GED examination to over 200 applicants; issued 495 certificates; registered or renewed 4,500 teachers' certificates; and issued 421 school bus driver permits. The Regional Superintendent also noted during the interview that all of the files and activities of the Educational Service Region are a matter of public record and, as such, are available for inspection (with proper authorization required in some instances).

The Regional Office's financial records are the concern of a number of individuals and agencies. The treasurer's bond files are reviewed annually by the Regional Superintendent as he works with the local school districts

to ensure adequate financial coverage. All accounts of the Regional Office of Education for McLean/DeWitt Counties are audited annually by an independent firm employed by McLean County. At the state level, the Illinois Comptroller maintains records of all financial dealings with Educational Service Regions and he annually audits the financial records of each Regional Office.

In addition to specific records such as finances, the Regional Superintendent is required to provide an annual report to the State Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Education. This report is to be a comprehensive overview of the office activities and services rendered by the Regional Office of Education for the preceding year. See Appendix C for a copy of part of such an annual report prepared by the Regional Office of Education for McLean/DeWitt Counties. On-site visitation, documentation, and review substantiates that all of the services mandated by the School Code are carried out to some degree.

#### Analysis and Implications of Data

A great deal of attention has been given in recent years to the activities of Regional Offices of Education in Illinois, particularly during the time leading up to and since the recent consolidation of such regions. As a result of such attention, the activities and services performed by the Educational Service Region for McLean/DeWitt Counties

have been very much a matter of public record. There is more than sufficient evidence available to indicate that this Regional Office is actually conducting the services and activities required of it to meet its responsibilities as identified by the Illinois School Code. On the other hand, there is no hard evidence available from any source to suggest that the McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education has established its own priorities from among the responsibilities put forth by The School Code of Illinois. As noted earlier, however, there are varying degrees of compliance. It would appear that minimal lip service is being paid to requirements for visitation and curriculum development while a great deal of time is spent in such administrative or secretarial functions as teacher certificate registration, issuance of school bus driver permits, and holding hearings for bus drivers who violate rules.

#### Question #6

Major question number six answered by this study includes the following analysis and interpretation.

Question #6--To what extent are the superintendents of local school districts aware of the major responsibilities and specific services available from the Educational Service Region? In instances where superintendents are not aware of the major

responsibilities of the Regional Office of Education, what are the reasons for this lack of awareness?

### Questionnaire Data

One portion of the questionnaire dealt specifically with the cognizance of the local superintendents in regards to twenty-five listed duties or services provided by the Regional Office of Education. The original list of duties and services numbered thirty-two in length and was taken directly from the list in the 1979 "Educational Service Region Study Commission Briefing Book" as shown on pages 77-79 of this chapter. That list was then reduced to the present number as a result of the comments and suggestions of the member superintendents of the field test group. The responses to the awareness section were then analyzed using five different factors: (1) total responses of all the superintendents, (2) tenure of the superintendent in his or her present position, (3) distance of the responding superintendent's district from the Educational Service Region, (4) size of the district in terms of the high school enrollment, and (5) the wealth of the district based on its expenditure per Average-Daily-Attendance pupil. The data necessary for the utilization of these factors were obtained from the demographic information provided by the responding superintendents in Section I of the survey questionnaire.

The total list of responses to the question of awareness is shown in Table 1. The first area of a lack of awareness on the part of the local superintendents--number 5, keep texts available for inspection--is no longer a responsibility of the Regional Office of Education, and this undoubtedly accounts for the responses. Other areas of indicated lack of awareness--numbers 11, 15, 18, 22, 23, and 24--will be discussed later in the interview section of this question.

The eleven superintendents who responded to the questionnaire have been in their present positions anywhere from one to twenty-four years, with the average being seven years. At the time the survey was taken, three of the superintendents were in their first year of service in their present position, and four had been there for a period of ten years or more. These superintendents were placed in the "new" and "long" groups respectively, with the other four comprising the "average" group. The responses of the superintendents in terms of their tenure in the position are shown in Table 2. Although there do not appear to be any significant differences in the responses of the superintendents when viewed from the standpoint of their tenure in the position, there is one item which is somewhat surprising and should be noted. When all of the "no" responses were totaled, the results showed fourteen negative answers from



TABLE 1

TOTAL RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "ARE YOU AWARE  
OF THE AVAILABILITY OF THIS DUTY OR SERVICE?"

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Responses	
		Yes	No
1.	Responsible for institutes or in-service workshops	11	0
2.	Visit each school once a year	10	1
3.	Direct and advise teachers and school officers	9	0
4.	Inspect all building plans and schools	10	0
5.	Keep texts available for inspection	5	6
6.	Register certificates	11	0
7.	Recommend the suspension of certificates	11	0
8.	See that all legal curriculum requirements are met	11	0
9.	Provide truancy services	11	0
10.	Provide a GED program	9	1
11.	Direct cooperative educational programs	7	4
12.	Issue school bus driver permits	11	0
13.	Provide in-service training for bus drivers	11	0
14.	Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws	11	0

TABLE 1--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Responses	
		Yes	No
15.	Issue employment certificates for minors under sixteen	7	4
16.	Keep a map of school districts	11	0
17.	Make a list of districts for treasurers	9	2
18.	Assume responsibility for certain scholarships	7	4
19.	Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds	11	0
20.	Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers	11	0
21.	Examine treasurer's books, accounts, and vouchers	8	3
22.	Sell Township fund lands	6	5
23.	Give notice of elections	7	4
24.	File poll books and election returns	6	5
25.	Remove school board member for wilful failure to perform official duties	9	2

the "new" group of superintendents, ten negative answers from the "average" group, and sixteen negative responses from the "long" group of superintendents. For some reason which was not apparent from the survey, the four superintendents who had been in the area the longest period of time were less aware of some of the available services than either of the other two groups of superintendents.

The districts of the responding superintendents are from one to thirty-four miles away from the Educational Service Region office, with the average being 15.8 miles distant. Two of the districts were more than one standard deviation from the mean closer to the Regional Office and two were more than one standard deviation farther from the Regional Office. These districts were placed in the "near" and "far" groups respectively, with the other seven districts being placed in the "average" group. The responses of the superintendents in terms of their districts' distances from the Educational Service Region office are shown in Table 3. Other than the textbook responsibility which has been explained previously, possible questions concerning awareness could be raised for the average group on numbers 18 and 24, the near group on number 22, and the far group on number 15. For example, is it possible that the near and far groups are aware of scholarship possibilities through the Educational Service Region because of their distance

TABLE 2

TENURE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "ARE YOU AWARE  
OF THE AVAILABILITY OF THIS DUTY OR SERVICE?"

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
1.	Responsible for institutes or in-service workshops	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	4	0
2.	Visit each school one a year	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	3	1
3.	Direct and advise teachers and school officers	New	3	0
		Average	3	0
		Long	3	0
4.	Inspect all building plans and schools	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	3	0
5.	Keep texts available for inspection	New	2	1
		Average	1	3
		Long	2	2
6.	Register certificates	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	4	0
7.	Recommend the suspension of certificates	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	4	0
8.	See that all legal cur- riculum requirements are met	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	4	0
9.	Provide truancy services	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	4	0

TABLE 2--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
10.	Provide a GED program	New	2	1
		Average	4	0
		Long	3	0
11.	Direct cooperative educational programs	New	2	1
		Average	3	1
		Long	2	2
12.	Issue school bus driver permits	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	4	0
13.	Provide in-service training for bus drivers	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	4	0
14.	Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	4	0
15.	Issue employment certificates for minors under sixteen	New	1	2
		Average	4	0
		Long	2	1
16.	Keep a map of school districts	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	4	0
17.	Make a list of districts for treasurers	New	2	1
		Average	4	0
		Long	3	1
18.	Assume responsibility for certain scholarships	New	2	1
		Average	3	1
		Long	2	2
19.	Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	4	0

TABLE 2--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
20.	Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	4	0
21.	Examine treasurer's books, accounts, and vouchers	New	2	1
		Average	3	1
		Long	3	1
22.	Sell Township fund lands	New	2	1
		Average	2	2
		Long	2	2
23.	Give notice of elections	New	2	1
		Average	3	1
		Long	2	2
24.	File poll books and election returns	New	1	2
		Average	3	1
		Long	2	2
25.	Remove school board mem- bers for wilful failure to perform official duties	New	1	2
		Average	4	0
		Long	4	0

from it? That is to say, the near group has easy access to the Regional Office and can pick up this type of information more readily than the other groups, while the far group of schools is so isolated that they make every effort and inquiry possible to help their students. One reason for the near group's response to the question of selling township fund lands is that one of the schools is a charter district in the city and has the authority to take this action itself if the need ever arises. The other school is a lab school of the university and, as such, this school also would never have the need for this service from the Regional Office of Education.

Once again, the total of the "no" responses yields an interesting set of figures: near group = 7, average group = 28, far group = 5. Those schools that are from six to twenty-six miles from the Regional Office are least aware of some of the services available from that office. This large difference in "no" responses is not easily explained. The composition of the group provides no clues, because both "large" and "small" schools are represented, as are "new" and "experienced" superintendents. Two possible reasons for these figures come to mind: the services for which most of the negative responses were given are rarely used or needed by the districts, or there is a breakdown in communications between the Educational Service Region and those schools

TABLE 3

DISTANCE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "ARE YOU AWARE  
OF THE AVAILABILITY OF THIS DUTY OR SERVICE?"

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
1.	Responsible for institutes or in-service workshops	Near Average Far	2	0
2.	Visit each school once a year	Near Average Far	2 6 2	0 1 0
3.	Direct and advise teachers and school officers	Near Average Far	1 6 2	0 0 0
4.	Inspect all building plans and schools	Near Average Far	1 7 2	0 0 0
5.	Keep texts available for inspection	Near Average Far	1 2 2	1 5 0
6.	Register certificates	Near Average Far	2 7 2	0 0 0
7.	Recommend the suspension of certificates	Near Average Far	2 7 2	0 0 0
8.	See that all legal cur- riculum requirements are met	Near Average Far	2 7 2	0 0 0
9.	Provide truancy services	Near Average Far	2 7 2	0 0 0



TABLE 3--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
10.	Provide a GED program	Near	2	0
		Average	6	1
		Far	2	0
11.	Direct cooperative educational programs	Near	0	2
		Average	5	2
		Far	2	0
12.	Issue school bus driver permits	Near	2	0
		Average	7	0
		Far	2	0
13.	Provide in-service training for bus drivers	Near	2	0
		Average	7	0
		Far	2	0
14.	Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws	Near	2	0
		Average	7	0
		Far	2	0
15.	Issue employment certificates for minors under sixteen	Near	2	0
		Average	5	2
		Far	0	2
16.	Keep a map of school districts	Near	2	0
		Average	7	0
		Far	2	0
17.	Make a list of districts for treasurers	Near	2	0
		Average	5	2
		Far	2	0
18.	Assume responsibility for certain scholarships	Near	1	1
		Average	4	3
		Far	2	0
19.	Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds	Near	2	0
		Average	7	0
		Far	2	0

TABLE 3--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
20.	Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers	Near	2	0
		Average	7	0
		Far	2	0
21.	Examine treasurer's books, accounts, and vouchers	Near	2	0
		Average	5	2
		Far	2	0
22.	Sell Township fund lands	Near	0	2
		Average	4	3
		Far	2	0
23.	Give notice of election	Near	1	1
		Average	5	2
		Far	1	1
24.	File poll books and election returns	Near	2	0
		Average	3	4
		Far	1	1
25.	Remove school board mem- bers for wilful failure to perform official duties	Near	2	0
		Average	6	1
		Far	1	1

from six to twenty-six miles distant. It should be pointed out, however, that when one looks at those services such as filing poll books or selling township fund lands, one would expect that the local educational agency would not be aware of these services simply because they are not what would normally be associated with an Educational Service Region.

The size of the districts of the responding superintendents ranged from a high school population of fifty-one to one of 1,700, with an average high school population of 419. With all but two of them grouped closely together in size, the Illinois High School Association standard of 750 students was used to divide the districts into two groups. There are two schools in the "big" group of over 750 high school students, and there are nine schools in the "small" group with less than 750 high school students. The responses of the superintendents in terms of the size of their high school enrollments are shown in Table 4. Due to the disparity in numbers in the two groups, and in particular to the small size of the "big" group, one must be careful in drawing conclusions based on these data. Possible questions could be raised, however, regarding the "small" group responses to numbers 15, 22, 23, and 24 in which a degree of unawareness was demonstrated. One possible reason for such a response from these "small" groups lies in their isolation and need for independence. Since these communities must

often provide their own services or do without, they may well have been performing these services for themselves without being aware that the Regional Office of Education was also required to offer these same services.

The amount of money spent by the districts per ADA pupil ranged from \$1,621 to \$4,854, with a mean expenditure of \$2,453. Since there was only one district with an expenditure of one or more standard deviations from the mean, reasonable comparisons could not be made between a group of ten schools and a "group" of one school. Once this determination was made, this factor was dropped from further consideration.

#### Interview Data

Once the questionnaires were returned and the data recorded, five of the responding superintendents were selected for a personal interview covering some of the questions raised by the responses to the survey instrument. In working with the area of awareness of the superintendents, the respondents were asked about the source of their awareness or knowledge of Regional Office of Education duties and services and why many were unaware of the availability of some services.

Four sources evolved from the discussion of reasons for knowing about duties or services provided by the Educational Service Region: (1) personal experiences, (2)

TABLE 4

SIZE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "ARE YOU AWARE OF  
THE AVAILABILITY OF THIS DUTY OR SERVICE?"

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
1.	Responsible for institutes or in-service workshops	Big	2	0
		Small	9	0
2.	Visit each school once a year	Big	2	0
		Small	8	1
3.	Direct and advise teachers and school officers	Big	1	0
		Small	8	0
4.	Inspect all building plans and schools	Big	1	0
		Small	9	0
5.	Keep texts available for inspection	Big	2	0
		Small	3	6
6.	Register certificates	Big	2	0
		Small	9	0
7.	Recommend the suspension of certificates	Big	2	0
		Small	9	0
8.	See that all legal cur- riculum requirements are met	Big	2	0
		Small	9	0
9.	Provide truancy services	Big	2	0
		Small	9	0
10.	Provide a GED program	Big	2	0
		Small	7	1
11.	Direct cooperative edu- cational programs	Big	1	1
		Small	6	3
12.	Issue school bus driver permits	Big	2	0
		Small	9	0

TABLE 4--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
13.	Provide in-service training for bus drivers	Big	2	0
		Small	9	0
14.	Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws	Big	2	0
		Small	9	0
15.	Issue employment certifi- cates for minors under sixteen	Big	2	0
		Small	5	4
16.	Keep a map of school districts	Big	2	0
		Small	9	0
17.	Make a list of districts for treasurers	Big	2	0
		Small	7	2
18.	Assume responsibility for certain scholarships	Big	1	1
		Small	6	3
19.	Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds	Big	2	0
		Small	9	0
20.	Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers	Big	2	0
		Small	9	0
21.	Examine treasurer's books, accounts, and vouchers	Big	2	0
		Small	6	3
22.	Sell Township fund lands	Big	2	0
		Small	4	5
23.	Give notice of elections	Big	2	0
		Small	5	4
24.	File poll books and election returns	Big	2	0
		Small	4	5

TABLE 4--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
25.	Remove school board mem- bers for wilful failure to perform official duties	Big	2	0
		Small	7	2

sharing of information by colleagues (other superintendents), (3) information put out by the Regional Office of Education, and (4) information obtained from in-district personnel such as school board members, principals, or teachers. Personal experience and the sharing of information by colleagues were the most frequent responses. This is an interesting observation, since tenure was not a factor at this time. These data may also indicate a communication gap between the Educational Service Region and the local educational agencies, since information was most frequently received in some way other than communication with the Regional Office of Education. Even though there are monthly meetings held by the Educational Service Region where information is shared, the present level of funding does not allow the Regional Office of Education to share or deliver more information about services through such means as a regular region-wide newsletter.

When questioned about a lack of knowledge about cooperative educational programs (number 11), employment certificates for minors (number 15), certain scholarships (number 18), sale of township lands (number 22), notice of elections (number 23), and filing election returns (number 24), the superintendents gave one or more of the following rank-ordered responses: (1) the service is not the type of thing one normally associates with the Regional Office of



Education, (2) they never thought about or experienced a need for the service, (3) there is no need for the service, and (4) the district performs the service itself.

### Analysis and Implications of Data

It seems apparent that the majority of the superintendents in McLean and DeWitt Counties are aware of the major responsibilities and specific services available from the Regional Office of Education. Where there are occurrences of a lack of awareness or knowledge by the local superintendents about a service, those occurrences appear to be the result of a lack of need for the service or a failure to associate that service with the operation of the Educational Service Region. Is this a communication gap? Possibly, in relation to some services. However, there are some services which are not basically educational in focus, such as the election services and the selling of the land, of which one would not expect the local superintendent to be aware.

One important factor which has a direct relationship to the awareness or knowledge of the local superintendents is the availability of good, direct communications between the area superintendents. There are two very active organizations for local superintendents within the McLean/DeWitt region; both of these organizations meet once a month during the school year. One organization is a superintendents'

"Drive-in" or "Round Table." This "Round Table" was developed to provide an opportunity to discuss common problems or needs, and it has an "unofficial" association with one of the local universities. Not all of the superintendents in McLean and DeWitt Counties belong to the "Round Table" group, and there are member superintendents from outside the McLean/DeWitt region. They set their own agenda and discuss common interests, including, on occasions, the Regional Office of Education.

The second organization is the McLean/DeWitt County Superintendents Association, which is sponsored by the Educational Service Region for this area; the membership is comprised solely of superintendents from McLean and DeWitt Counties. The agenda is prepared by the Regional Superintendent with input by the local superintendents, and they often discuss common problems or interests and what the Regional Office of Education can do to help.

The net result of these two organizations is that there are ample opportunities to meet and exchange ideas or information. If a local superintendent has a problem or need, he will often find a solution at one of these organizations' meetings. If that organization happens to be the McLean/DeWitt County Superintendents Association, the superintendent might hear about any available services or resources of the Educational Service Region.

Question #7

Major question number seven answered by this study includes the following analysis and interpretation.

Question #7--To what extent are the superintendents of local school districts utilizing the services of the Educational Service Region as identified? Which services are most and least frequently utilized? In instances where services are infrequently utilized, what are the reasons for them not being fully utilized? Are the local school district superintendents ever discouraged from using services provided by the Educational Service Region? If so, by whom or what?

Questionnaire Data

A second section of the survey instrument specifically requested information regarding the utilization of the twenty-five listed duties or services provided by the Regional Office of Education. This information was then studied in relation to the same four factors as previously noted, and it is summarized on Tables 5 through 8.

The most frequently used services, according to Table 5, were: (1) the issuance of school bus driver permits, (2) the provision of truancy services, (3) the notification of districts of monies sent to treasurers, and (4) the issuance of employment certificates for minors under

TABLE 5

TOTAL RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "HOW FREQUENTLY  
DO YOU OR YOUR DISTRICT USE THIS SERVICE?"

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Monthly	Responses		Never
			5-6 Times /year	1-2 Times /year	
1.	Responsible for in- stitutes or in-service workshops	0	0	8	0
2.	Visit each school once a year	0	0	7	3
3.	Direct and advise teachers and school officers	0	2	6	0
4.	Inspect all building plans and schools	0	0	8	2
5.	Keep texts available for inspection	0	0	1	8
6.	Register certificates	0	0	9	1
7.	Recommend the sus- pension of certificates	0	0	1	8
8.	See that all legal cur- riculum requirements are met	0	0	6	3
9.	Provide truancy services	0	3	7	0
10.	Provide a GED program	0	0	4	4
11.	Direct cooperative educational programs	0	0	6	3
12.	Issue school bus driver permits	5	3	2	1

TABLE 5--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Monthly	Responses		Never
			5-6 Times /year	1-2 Times /year	
13.	Provide in-service training for bus drivers	0	2	8	1
14.	Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws	0	0	5	5
15.	Issue employment certificates for minors under sixteen	1	1	4	4
16.	Keep a map of school districts	0	0	4	6
17.	Make a list of districts for treasurers	0	1	2	6
18.	Assume responsibility for certain scholarships	0	1	4	3
19.	Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds	1	0	6	2
20.	Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers	2	2	3	1
21.	Examine treasurer's books, accounts, and vouchers	1	1	3	3
22.	Sell Township fund lands	0	0	0	9
23.	Give notice of elections	0	0	1	7

TABLE 5--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Monthly	Responses		Never
			5-6 Times /year	1-2 Times /year	
24.	File poll books and election returns	0	0	2	7
25.	Remove school board members for wilful failure to perform official duties	0	0	0	10

TABLE 6

TENURE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "HOW FREQUENTLY  
DO YOU OR YOUR DISTRICT USE THIS SERVICE?"

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Monthly	Responses		Never
				5-6 Times /year	1-2 Times /year	
1.	Responsible for institutes or in-service work- shops	New	0	0	2	0
		Average	0	0	4	0
		Long	0	0	2	0
2.	Visit each school once a year	New	0	0	2	0
		Average	0	0	3	1
		Long	0	0	2	2
3.	Direct and ad- vise teachers and school officers	New	0	1	2	0
		Average	0	1	2	0
		Long	0	0	2	0
4.	Inspect all building plans and schools	New	0	0	3	0
		Average	0	0	2	2
		Long	0	0	3	0
5.	Keep texts available for inspection	New	0	0	1	1
		Average	0	0	0	3
		Long	0	0	0	4
6.	Register certificates	New	0	0	3	0
		Average	0	0	4	0
		Long	0	0	2	1
7.	Recommend the suspension of certificates	New	0	0	1	2
		Average	0	0	0	4
		Long	0	0	0	3
8.	See that all legal cur- riculum requirements are met	New	0	0	1	1
		Average	0	0	3	1
		Long	0	0	2	1

TABLE 6--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Monthly	Responses		Never
				5-6 Times /year	1-2 Times /year	
9.	Provide truancy services	New	0	1	2	0
		Average	0	2	2	0
		Long	0	0	3	0
10.	Provide a GED program	New	0	0	1	1
		Average	0	0	2	2
		Long	0	0	1	1
11.	Direct co- operative educational programs	New	0	0	2	0
		Average	0	0	3	1
		Long	0	0	1	3
12.	Issue school bus driver permits	New	0	1	2	0
		Average	3	0	0	1
		Long	2	2	0	0
13.	Provide in- service training for bus drivers	New	0	1	2	0
		Average	0	0	3	1
		Long	0	1	3	0
14.	Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws	New	0	0	2	1
		Average	0	0	2	0
		Long	0	0	1	2
15.	Issue employment certificates for minors under sixteen	New	1	0	1	0
		Average	0	1	2	1
		Long	0	0	1	3
16.	Keep a map of school dis- tricts	New	0	0	1	1
		Average	0	0	3	1
		Long	0	0	0	4
17.	Make a list of districts for treasurers	New	0	1	1	0
		Average	0	0	1	3
		Long	0	0	0	3



TABLE 6--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Monthly	Responses		Never
				5-6 Times /year	1-2 Times /year	
18.	Assume respon- sibility for certain scholarships	New	0	1	1	0
		Average	0	0	2	1
		Long	0	0	1	2
19.	Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds	New	1	0	1	0
		Average	0	0	3	1
		Long	0	0	2	1
20.	Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers	New	0	0	2	0
		Average	1	1	1	1
		Long	1	1	0	0
21.	Examine treasurer's books, ac- counting and vouchers	New	0	1	1	0
		Average	0	0	2	1
		Long	1	0	0	2
22.	Sell Township fund lands	New	0	0	0	2
		Average	0	0	0	3
		Long	0	0	0	4
23.	Give notice of elections	New	0	0	1	1
		Average	0	0	0	3
		Long	0	0	0	3
24.	File poll books and election returns	New	0	0	1	1
		Average	0	0	0	3
		Long	0	0	1	3
25.	Remove school board members for wilful failure to per- form official duties	New	0	0	0	2
		Average	0	0	0	4
		Long	0	0	0	4

TABLE 7

DISTANCE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "HOW FREQUENTLY  
DO YOU OR YOUR DISTRICT USE THIS SERVICE?"

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Monthly	Responses		
				5-6 Times /year	1-2 Times /year	Never
1.	Responsible for institutes or in-service workshops	Near	0	0	1	0
		Average	0	0	6	0
		Far	0	0	1	0
2.	Visit each school once a year	Near	0	0	2	0
		Average	0	0	3	3
		Far	0	0	2	0
3.	Direct and ad- vise teachers and school officers	Near	0	1	0	0
		Average	0	1	5	0
		Far	0	0	1	0
4.	Inspect all building plans and schools	Near	0	0	1	0
		Average	0	0	5	2
		Far	0	0	2	0
5.	Keep texts available for inspection	Near	0	0	0	2
		Average	0	0	1	4
		Far	0	0	0	2
6.	Register certificates	Near	0	0	0	1
		Average	0	0	7	0
		Far	0	0	2	0
7.	Recommend the suspension of certificates	Near	0	0	0	1
		Average	0	0	1	6
		Far	0	0	0	1
8.	See that all legal cur- riculum requirements are met	Near	0	0	1	0
		Average	0	0	5	1
		Far	0	0	0	2

TABLE 7--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Monthly	Responses		Never
				5-6 Times /year	1-2 Times /year	
9.	Provide truancy services	Near	0	1	0	0
		Average	0	1	6	0
		Far	0	1	1	0
10.	Provide a GED program	Near	0	0	1	0
		Average	0	0	3	3
		Far	0	0	0	1
11.	Direct co- operative educational programs	Near	0	0	0	1
		Average	0	0	5	1
		Far	0	0	1	1
12.	Issue school bus driver permits	Near	1	0	0	1
		Average	4	2	1	0
		Far	0	1	1	0
13.	Provide in- service training for bus drivers	Near	0	0	1	1
		Average	0	2	5	0
		Far	0	0	2	0
14.	Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws	Near	0	0	0	1
		Average	0	0	4	3
		Far	0	0	1	1
15.	Issue employ- ment certificates for minors under sixteen	Near	0	1	0	1
		Average	1	0	3	2
		Far	0	0	1	1
16.	Keep a map of school dis- tricts	Near	0	0	1	1
		Average	0	0	2	4
		Far	0	0	1	1

TABLE 7--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Monthly	Responses		Never
				5-6 Times /year	1-2 Times /year	
17.	Make a list of districts for treasurers	Near	0	0	0	1
		Average	0	1	1	4
		Far	0	0	1	1
18.	Assume respon- sibility for certain scholarships	Near	0	0	1	0
		Average	0	1	1	3
		Far	0	0	2	0
19.	Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds	Near	0	0	0	1
		Average	1	0	5	0
		Far	0	0	1	1
20.	Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers	Near	0	0	0	1
		Average	1	2	2	1
		Far	1	0	1	0
21.	Examine treasurer's books, ac- counts, and vouchers	Near	0	0	0	2
		Average	0	1	2	1
		Far	1	0	1	0
22.	Sell Township fund lands	Near	0	0	0	2
		Average	0	0	0	5
		Far	0	0	0	2
23.	Give notice of elections	Near	0	0	0	2
		Average	0	0	1	3
		Far	0	0	0	2
24.	File poll books and election returns	Near	0	0	0	2
		Average	0	0	1	4
		Far	0	0	1	1

TABLE 7--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Monthly	Responses		Never
				5-6 Times /year	1-2 Times /year	
25.	Remove school	Near	0	0	0	2
	board members	Average	0	0	0	6
	for wilful	Far	0	0	0	2
	failure to per- form official duties					

TABLE 8

SIZE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "HOW FREQUENTLY  
DO YOU OR YOUR DISTRICT USE THIS SERVICE?"

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Monthly	Responses		Never
				5-6 Times /year	1-2 Times /year	
1.	Responsible for institutes or in-service workshops	Big	0	0	1	0
		Small	0	0	7	0
2.	Visit each school once a year	Big	0	0	1	0
		Small	0	0	6	3
3.	Direct and ad- vise teachers and school officers	Big	0	0	1	0
		Small	0	2	5	0
4.	Inspect all building plans and schools	Big	0	0	1	0
		Small	0	0	7	2
5.	Keep texts available for inspection	Big	0	0	1	1
		Small	0	0	0	7
6.	Register certificates	Big	0	0	1	0
		Small	0	0	8	1
7.	Recommend the suspension of certificates	Big	0	0	1	0
		Small	0	0	0	8
8.	See that all legal cur- riculum requirements are met	Big	0	0	1	0
		Small	0	0	5	3

TABLE 8--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Monthly	Responses		Never
				5-6 Times /year	1-2 Times /year	
9.	Provide truancy services	Big	0	0	1	0
		Small	0	3	6	0
10.	Provide a GED program	Big	0	0	1	0
		Small	0	0	3	4
11.	Direct co- operative educational programs	Big	0	0	1	0
		Small	0	0	5	3
12.	Issue school bus driver permits	Big	1	1	0	0
		Small	4	2	2	1
13.	Provide in- service training for bus drivers	Big	0	1	0	1
		Small	0	1	8	0
14.	Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws	Big	0	0	1	0
		Small	0	0	4	5
15.	Issue employ- ment certificates for minors under sixteen	Big	1	0	0	1
		Small	0	1	4	3
16.	Keep a map of school dis- tricts	Big	0	0	0	1
		Small	0	0	4	5
17.	Make a list of districts for treasurers	Big	0	1	0	0
		Small	0	0	2	6

TABLE 8--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Monthly	Responses		Never
				5-6 Times /year	1-2 Times /year	
18.	Assume respon- sibility for certain scholarships	Big	0	1	0	0
		Small	0	0	4	3
19.	Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds	Big	1	0	0	0
		Small	0	0	6	2
20.	Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers	Big	0	0	1	0
		Small	2	2	2	1
21.	Examine treasurer's books, ac- counts, and vouchers	Big	0	1	0	1
		Small	1	0	3	2
22.	Sell Township fund lands	Big	0	0	0	2
		Small	0	0	0	7
23.	Give notice of elections	Big	0	0	1	1
		Small	0	0	0	6
24.	File poll books and election returns	Big	0	0	1	1
		Small	0	0	1	6
25.	Remove school board members for wilful failure to perform of- ficial duties	Big	0	0	0	2
		Small	0	0	0	8



The least frequently used services, according to Table 5, were: (1) the removal of school board members, (2) the sale of township fund lands, (3) the recommendation for the suspension of certificates, and (4) the notification of elections.

From the table of Total Responses, the most obvious result is the infrequency with which most of the services are utilized. These are supposed to be twenty-five of the most representative and major responsibilities and duties performed by an Educational Service Region, and yet fifteen of the twenty-five services--60 percent--are used no more than one or two times a year by the local school districts! One should be cautious about jumping to too hard a conclusion based on these data because some of the services, such as keeping a map of school districts, making a list of districts for treasurers, and evaluating and filing school treasurer's bonds, are designed to be used once a year or even less frequently. The services which could be more frequently utilized include the responsibility for institutes or in-service workshops, and visiting each school once a year. Greater utilization would require greater expenditures by the Educational Service Region, and the funding problems of this office have been previously noted.

#### Interview Data

The first utilization question asked of the superintendents during the interviews was why so many of the

services are so infrequently utilized, and the answer was surprisingly simple. The very nature of most of the services offered by the Regional Office of Education is that they are only needed one or two times a year at most; some are needed even less frequently! Once this fact is realized, a quick review of the list of services proves it to be true. For example, services noted in questions 7, 14, 16, 19, 22, 23, 24, and 25 are likely to be used once a year at most, with questions 7, 22, and 25 probably even less frequently utilized. Several of the superintendents did comment, however, that they were glad numbers 7 and 25 were available even if they never were used.

When questioned about their non-usage of some of the services, the superintendents were almost unanimous in their responses. Regardless of the size of the district, the distance of the district from the Educational Service Region, or the tenure of the superintendent, they agreed that too much time is required to fill out forms and do the paperwork. While most of the superintendents were quick to point out that the responsibility for this rests with the state and not with the Regional Office of Education, they said it was easier for their districts to do things themselves. If the complaint about too much paperwork is a true statement, then there needs to be some simplification of the procedures for providing the services. If there is so much hassle in providing the service that no one uses it, then

what is the sense of offering that service? In the area of legal opinions, for example, most districts rely on their own attorneys rather than go through the Educational Service Region office to the state office in Springfield and then back.

### Analysis and Implications of Data

The very nature of many of the services offered by the Regional Office of Education dictates that they will only occasionally be used by local school districts. Does this mean that those services should no longer be provided by the Regional Office? Not necessarily. While some of the services could be--and are--performed by the local districts, those same districts should be able to turn to a reasonably local authority for service or information when needed. If these services were no longer provided by the Educational Service Region, local districts would have to go to the state office in Springfield for help, and that is too far away.

One important factor which does not show up in the survey instrument is the utilization of some of these services by principals. Many questions or requests for services go directly to the Regional Office of Education from the building principals without the knowledge of the superintendents, and this utilization was not reflected in the data.

Nevertheless, some changes should be made in the provision of services by the Educational Service Region. The amount of paperwork required of local districts by the state through the Regional Office of Education should be reduced. This would allow the local districts more time and perhaps encourage them to more frequently utilize the services provided by the Regional Office. The Educational Service Region should have the authority--or have immediately available the authority--to give legal opinions or other services without needing to turn to Springfield. The knowledge that they could get an immediate response to legal questions might encourage local school districts to make greater use of Educational Service Region services. It would also probably save some money for the local school districts because they would make fewer calls on their own retained attorney. Another possible change which could be made would be to have the bus driver permits and all related work done through the Secretary of State's office. This would free time and money to be spent elsewhere by the Educational Service Region.

The only references made by any of the superintendents to being discouraged from using services offered by the Regional Office of Education were directed toward bureaucratic red tape and one minor comment about distance. The local superintendents are unanimously concerned about the

time and cost spent in filling out all of the forms and paperwork required by the Educational Service Region and the state.

#### Question #8

Major question number eight answered by this study includes the following analysis and interpretation.

Question #8--To what extent do local district superintendents and the superintendent of the Educational Service Region agree as to the awareness of the local school district superintendents and their utilization of services offered by the Educational Service Region?

#### Interview Data

The Regional Superintendent said that he would expect all of the local school district superintendents to be generally aware of most of the services listed on the questionnaire. He said they would get the information and service they needed when they filled out their annual forms and when they attended the meetings sponsored by his office. If he had to choose which services were now known by the district superintendents, the Regional Superintendent said it would probably be the last four listed on the questionnaire, particularly the removal of school board members and the sale of township lands.

In regards to the utilization of services, the Regional Superintendent noted that the very nature of the services available from the Regional Office of Education dictates their use; many of the services are intended to be used as support for the local districts after their own efforts have failed to resolve a problem. He also made a distinction between who uses the services. The local superintendents, by the very nature of their positions, tend to have more knowledge and experience in school matters than other people in their districts. As a result, the district superintendents usually do not need to call upon the Educational Service Region office for help; Principals and other district administrators, however, have a tendency to make more frequent calls to the Regional Office for help or information.

#### Analysis and Implications of Data

The Regional Superintendent showed a great deal of knowledge and insight regarding the local school district superintendents. His analysis of their responses--without actually having seen them--was extremely accurate and thorough (see Tables 1 through 12). As a result, there was a high level of agreement between the Regional Superintendent and the local school district superintendents as to the awareness of the local superintendents and their utilization of the services offered by the Educational Service Region.

This congruence was not surprising because the record keeping of the service utilization by the Regional Office staff is thorough and, because of the relatively small number of school districts in this Educational Service Region, there is close and frequent personal contact between the Regional Superintendent and the local school district superintendents. The close homogeneity of the local educational agencies (fifteen or sixteen are unit districts) also could have an effect on the knowledge and awareness of the Regional Superintendent.

#### Question #9

Major question number nine answered by this study includes the following analysis and interpretation.

Question #9--What steps can be taken to improve the relationship between the Educational Service Region office and the local school districts? Does the Regional Office of Education have the authority to take these steps itself, or must the Illinois Office of Education increase the authority of the Educational Service Region to allow them to expand their services?

#### Questionnaire Data

One view of the relationships which exist between the Regional Office of Education and the local school

districts it serves is provided by a third section of the survey instrument and the questions which immediately preceded it. The district superintendents were asked to indicate if the listed services were really needed by their districts, and their responses are shown on Tables 9 through 12. It is interesting to note that many of the services which are infrequently utilized are also considered necessary by the local school district superintendents, such as keeping a map of school districts, recommending the suspension of certificates, and the responsibility for institutes and in-service workshops.

Table 9, Total Responses to the Question: "Is This Service or Some Part Of It Really Needed?," indicates that the superintendents view the following services as the most needed: number 9--provide truancy services; number 12--issue school bus driver permits; number 13--provide in-service training for bus drivers; and number 14--hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws. All of these services fall in the area of legal services, with the superintendents recognizing this as an area which they cannot provide for their own districts. The least needed services as indicated on Table 9 are: number 5--keep texts available for inspection; number 15--issue employment certificates for minors under sixteen; number 22--sell Township fund lands; number 24--file poll books and election returns;



TABLE 9

TOTAL RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "IS THIS SERVICE  
OR SOME PART OF IT REALLY NEEDED?"

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Responses	
		Yes	No
1.	Responsible for institutes or in-service workshops	7	2
2.	Visit each school once a year	6	2
3.	Direct and advise teachers and school officers	8	1
4.	Inspect all building plans and schools	8	2
5.	Keep texts available for in- spection	1	9
6.	Register certificates	8	1
7.	Recommend the suspension of certificates	6	3
8.	See that all legal curriculum requirements are met	8	1
9.	Provide truancy services	10	0
10.	Provide a GED program	7	3
11.	Direct cooperative educational programs	7	3
12.	Issue school bus driver permits	10	1
13.	Provide in-service training for bus drivers	10	0

TABLE 9--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Responses	
		Yes	No
14.	Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws	10	1
15.	Issue employment certificates for minors under sixteen	4	7
16.	Keep a map of school districts	8	1
17.	Make a list of districts for treasurers	4	5
18.	Assume responsibility for certain scholarships	5	4
19.	Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds	7	3
20.	Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers	8	2
21.	Examine treasurer's books, accounts, and vouchers	4	5
22.	Sell Township fund lands	4	6
23.	Give notice of elections	4	5
24.	File poll books and election returns	3	6
25.	Remove school board members for wilful failure to perform official duties	5	6

TABLE 10

TENURE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "IS THIS SERVICE  
OR SOME PART OF IT REALLY NEEDED?"

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
1.	Responsible for institutes or in-service workshops	New	2	1
		Average	3	1
		Long	2	0
2.	Visit each school once a year	New	3	0
		Average	1	1
		Long	1	1
3.	Direct and advise teachers and school officers	New	3	0
		Average	3	1
		Long	2	0
4.	Inspect all building plans and schools	New	3	0
		Average	3	0
		Long	3	1
5.	Keep texts available for inspection	New	1	2
		Average	0	3
		Long	0	4
6.	Register certificates	New	2	1
		Average	3	0
		Long	3	0
7.	Recommend the suspension of certificates	New	1	1
		Average	3	1
		Long	2	1
8.	See that all legal cur- riculum requirements are met	New	2	0
		Average	3	1
		Long	3	0
9.	Provide truancy services	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	4	0

TABLE 10--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
10.	Provide a GED program	New	2	1
		Average	2	2
		Long	3	0
11.	Direct cooperative educational programs	New	1	2
		Average	4	0
		Long	2	1
12.	Issue school bus driver permits	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	3	1
13.	Provide in-service training for bus drivers	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	3	0
14.	Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws	New	3	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	3	1
15.	Issue employment certificates for minors under sixteen	New	2	1
		Average	1	3
		Long	1	3
16.	Keep a map of school districts	New	2	0
		Average	4	0
		Long	2	1
17.	Make a list of districts for treasurers	New	2	0
		Average	1	3
		Long	1	2
18.	Assume responsibility for certain scholarships	New	2	1
		Average	2	1
		Long	1	2
19.	Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds	New	3	0
		Average	3	1
		Long	1	2

TABLE 10--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
20.	Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers	New	3	0
		Average	3	1
		Long	2	1
21.	Examine treasurer's books, vouchers, and accounts	New	2	1
		Average	2	1
		Long	0	3
22.	Sell Township fund lands	New	2	1
		Average	2	1
		Long	0	4
23.	Give notice of elections	New	2	1
		Average	2	1
		Long	0	3
24.	File poll books and election returns	New	1	1
		Average	2	1
		Long	0	4
25.	Remove school board mem- bers for wilful failure to perform official duties	New	2	1
		Average	2	2
		Long	1	3

TABLE 11

DISTANCE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "IS THIS SERVICE  
OR SOME PART OF IT REALLY NEEDED?"

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
1.	Responsible for institutes or in-service workshops	Near	1	0
		Average	5	2
		Far	1	0
2.	Visit each school once a year	Near	0	0
		Average	4	2
		Far	2	0
3.	Direct and advise teachers and school officers	Near	1	0
		Average	6	1
		Far	1	0
4.	Inspect all building plans and schools	Near	1	0
		Average	5	2
		Far	2	0
5.	Keep texts available for inspection	Near	0	2
		Average	1	5
		Far	0	2
6.	Register certificates	Near	1	1
		Average	5	1
		Far	2	0
7.	Recommend the suspension of certificates	Near	1	0
		Average	5	1
		Far	0	2
8.	See that all legal cur- riculum requirements are met	Near	1	0
		Average	6	1
		Far	1	0
9.	Provide truancy services	Near	1	0
		Average	7	0
		Far	2	0

TABLE 11--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
10.	Provide a GED program	Near	1	0
		Average	4	3
		Far	2	0
11.	Direct cooperative educational programs	Near	1	0
		Average	5	2
		Far	1	1
12.	Issue school bus driver permits	Near	1	1
		Average	7	0
		Far	2	0
13.	Provide in-service training for bus drivers	Near	1	0
		Average	7	0
		Far	2	0
14.	Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws	Near	1	1
		Average	7	0
		Far	2	0
15.	Issue employment certificates for minors under sixteen	Near	0	2
		Average	3	4
		Far	1	1
16.	Keep a map of school districts	Near	1	0
		Average	5	1
		Far	2	0
17.	Make a list of districts for treasurers	Near	0	1
		Average	2	4
		Far	2	0
18.	Assume responsibility for certain scholarships	Near	0	1
		Average	3	3
		Far	2	0
19.	Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds	Near	1	0
		Average	5	2
		Far	1	1

TABLE 11--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
20.	Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers	Near	1	0
		Average	5	2
		Far	2	0
21.	Examine treasurer's books, accounts, and vouchers	Near	1	0
		Average	2	4
		Far	1	1
22.	Sell Township fund lands	Near	1	1
		Average	2	4
		Far	1	1
23.	Give notice of elections	Near	1	1
		Average	3	2
		Far	0	2
24.	File poll books and election returns	Near	1	1
		Average	2	3
		Far	0	2
25.	Remove school board mem- bers for wilful failure to perform official duties	Near	0	2
		Average	5	2
		Far	0	2



TABLE 12

SIZE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "IS THIS SERVICE  
OR SOME PART OF IT REALLY NEEDED?"

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
1.	Responsible for institutes or in-service workshops	Big	1	0
		Small	6	2
2.	Visit each school once a year	Big	1	0
		Small	5	2
3.	Direct and advise teachers and school officers	Big	1	0
		Small	7	1
4.	Inspect all building plans and schools	Big	1	0
		Small	7	2
5.	Keep texts available for inspection	Big	1	1
		Small	0	8
6.	Register certificates	Big	1	1
		Small	7	0
7.	Recommend the suspension of certificates	Big	1	0
		Small	5	3
8.	See that all legal cur- riculum requirements are met	Big	1	0
		Small	7	1
9.	Provide truancy services	Big	1	0
		Small	9	0
10.	Provide a GED program	Big	1	0
		Small	6	3
11.	Direct cooperative edu- cational programs	Big	1	0
		Small	6	3

TABLE 12--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
12.	Issue school bus driver permits	Big	1	1
		Small	9	0
13.	Provide in-service training for bus drivers	Big	1	0
		Small	9	0
14.	Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws	Big	1	1
		Small	9	0
15.	Issue employment certifi- cates for minors under sixteen	Big	1	1
		Small	3	6
16.	Keep a map of school districts	Big	1	0
		Small	7	1
17.	Make a list of districts for treasurers	Big	1	0
		Small	3	5
18.	Assume responsibility for certain scholarships	Big	1	0
		Small	4	4
19.	Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds	Big	1	0
		Small	6	3
20.	Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers	Big	1	0
		Small	7	2
21.	Examine treasurer's books, accounts, and vouchers	Big	1	1
		Small	3	4
22.	Sell Township fund lands	Big	1	1
		Small	3	5
23.	Give notice of elections	Big	1	1
		Small	3	4

TABLE 12--Continued

Number	Duty or Service from the Regional Office	Group	Responses	
			Yes	No
24.	File poll books and election returns	Big	1	1
		Small	2	5
25.	Remove school board mem- bers for wilful failure to perform official duties	Big	1	1
		Small	4	5

and number 25--remove school board members for wilful failure to perform official duties. These services correspond very closely to those identified by the superintendents as the least frequently used services. It would appear reasonable for the superintendents to conclude that they have no need for services which they do not use.

Table 10 shows the responses from the viewpoint of the tenure of the superintendent in his present position. It is interesting to note that the four superintendents in the "Long" tenure group provided almost 50 percent of the negative responses and saw less need for current ROE services than either of the other two groups. Assuming that knowledge is acquired through prolonged tenure in a position, these superintendents should be able to do more for their districts without having the need to call upon the Regional Office of Education for services. The four superintendents in the "Average" group barely edged out the "New" group as seeing the greatest need for the current services offered by the Educational Service Region, with unanimous support for numbers 9, 12, 13, 14 as previously noted, as well as number 11--direct cooperative educational programs and number 16--keep a map of school districts. These superintendents are experiencing some financial problems and would like to see the Regional Office assume some responsibility for coordinating cooperative programs for many of the

districts. One result which might have been anticipated was that the "New" superintendents had the highest percentage (78.6 percent) of positive answers while the "Long" group had the lowest percentage (53 percent) of positive answers. Not only were these percentages the respective highs and lows for this question, but they were also the highest and lowest percentages for this set of tables.

Table 11 gives the responses for the distance variable. Once again, all of the superintendents see some need for the majority of the services presently offered by the Regional Office of Education. The two superintendents in the "Near" group see the least need for current services, but the nature of the two districts (as explained on page 102) probably accounts for many of their negative responses.

Table 12 provides the responses given in consideration of the size of the districts. Although the two groups are quite different in numbers, their responses offer very little difference.

Relating to the need for the present services being offered by the Educational Service Region was the following question: "Are there services, possibly presently being offered by other agencies, which could best be offered by the Regional Office of Education?" There were three groups of services which were each identified by two or more superintendents. One group of services was the

programs and services presently available through the State Board of Education Service Centers and Program Service Teams. A second group of services was a large number of educational cooperatives, including vocational, trainable, adult education, and computer services. The third service was for the Regional Office of Education to be totally responsible for and conduct the supervision and visitation as now performed by the state's Department of Recognition and Supervision.

Additional support for the provision of this type of service came from the superintendents' responses to the following question: "Is there a need for services which are not being offered by any agency and which could be offered by the Regional Office?" Here, again, was mentioned the need for various cooperative services and programs, including gifted, vocational, curriculum specialists, and more cooperative purchasing. Another area mentioned was to give the Educational Service Region more authority and input into the determination and clarification of teacher qualifications for various types of certificates. Obviously, an expansion of the Regional Office of Education to include these kinds of services would require additional funding.

Another way of assessing the existing relationship between the Regional Office of Education for McLean/DeWitt Counties and its local districts is by comparing it with

previous experiences with other Educational Service Regions. Six of the responding superintendents had some prior experience working under other Regional Offices or other systems of middle-level state educational administration organizations; one of them made no comparison at all, but the other five responded to this question: "If you have had previous experience working with a Regional Office of Education other than the McLean/DeWitt office, please compare that office with the McLean/DeWitt office in terms of service and relationships with local school districts." Keeping in mind that several of the superintendents had previous experiences with more than one other Regional Office, the McLean/DeWitt office was rated as "about the same" as four others and "better" or "very good" when compared with four more Regional offices. Not one superintendent placed the McLean/DeWitt office below any other Regional Office.

Still another means of looking at the relationship was sought by the following question: "How do you perceive the relationship between the Regional Office of Education and your school district? Professional-unprofessional? Satisfactory-unsatisfactory? Good-bad? Other terms?" The responses to this question are shown below on Table 13. While the overall responses of the superintendents indicated that the relationship was a professional and satisfactory one, the interviews with the local

superintendents revealed that this item on the questionnaire was not clear and was somewhat confusing. Therefore, no further discussion will be presented.

Finally, this question was asked of the superintendents: "What steps can be taken to improve the services and the relationship between the Educational Service Region office and your school district?" One superintendent responded: "Add other available services to districts and eliminate SBE Area Service Centers which are too distant to provide much service." A second said: "ESR to become involved in developing services that can be prorated back to user districts." The other eight responding superintendents said nothing could be done to improve the existing relationship; everything is fine as it is.

#### Interview Data

In the personal interviews, the local district superintendents were asked to expand upon their responses to the question of improving existing relationships with the Regional Office of Education. The comments continued to be of a positive nature--"good, positive relationship to date," "ROE personnel outgoing and willing to help," "don't know if it could be improved," "More initiative on my part, not the ROE's," "depends on need--good legal advice has been helpful."



TABLE 13

SUPERINTENDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR  
DISTRICTS' RELATIONSHIP WITH THE  
REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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<u>Professional</u>	<u>Unprofessional</u>
8	0
<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>
4	0
<u>Good</u>	<u>Bad</u>
4	0
<u>Other terms</u>	
Cooperative	
Supportive	
Mutual coexistence	
Excellent	

---

When questioned about the addition or change of services offered by the Educational Service Region, superintendents indicated that some change could make the Regional Office of Education more service oriented and even more responsive to the individual needs of the local districts. This orientation, in turn, would lead to better utilization of services by the districts.

The superintendents were told that several of them had indicated a better relationship with the McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education than had been previously experienced elsewhere; they were then asked to explain why this might be the case. Their answers included: "The superintendent and his staff are good people, helpful, know the answers or will get them as soon as possible." "The people are knowledgeable and extend themselves." "They make an effort for you and return your calls." "They are responsive to your questions and needs."

When the Regional Superintendent was asked his views of the relationship, he indicated there was a great variation between districts, but he thought the relationship to be generally good.

When asked about what steps could be taken to improve the relationship and whether the Regional Office of Education had the authority to take such steps, the Regional Superintendent said that unless an idea was illegal, it

could be implemented by the Regional Office. The main problem would be finding the finances for new programs or services. As was indicated earlier, the Educational Service Region operates on a very tight budget, and he reemphasized the point that the lack of LEA status to receive state aid funds hurts and hinders the Regional Office of Education. As to possible steps he would like to see taken, the Regional Superintendent acknowledged that certification is the responsibility of the state, but he feels the role of the Regional Office could be expanded to help the state more. He also felt that more cooperative educational programs--vocational, special education, gifted, and adult education--should be centered in the office of the Educational Service Region. He also expressed an interest in adding services in the areas of curriculum specialists and computers.

#### Analysis and Implications of Data

Given numerous opportunities to express their views of the relationships which exist between the McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education and their respective districts, local school district superintendents were almost unanimous in their praise of the Educational Service Region for McLean/DeWitt Counties. These positive responses crossed all boundary lines--size, distance, and tenure. This solid support for the office and personnel of the Educational

service Region for McLean/DeWitt Counties appears to be a rather strong contradiction to Maurice P. Hunt's quote of Koerner (page 3) about this office commanding no respect from school superintendents. Where any negative responses did appear, they came from large school districts which could provide more services for themselves than the Regional Office of Education could give them. All of the other school districts served by the McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education need one or more of the services provided by that office. They recognize that need, would like to make better use of more services, and appreciate the manner in which the service is delivered to them.

Apparently an Educational Service Region has the authority to provide any legal service it sees fit to offer, but it is limited by the present means of financing its operations. New or additional means of financing Regional Office of Education services and programs must be sought or provided by the Illinois Office of Education. This new financing should be accompanied by a thorough revamping of the duties and services required of the Regional Office of Education by the Illinois School Code and the Illinois Office of Education. This opinion is in total agreement with Donald Muirhead's view of the Regional Superintendent being saddled with antiquated functions and restricted from trying to meet current educational needs.

### Summary

In this chapter, the nine major questions of the study were presented along with the research data acquired through a review of literature, a personal interview with the superintendent of the Educational Service Region for McLean/DeWitt Counties, a survey instrument mailed to all secondary and unit school district superintendents in McLean and DeWitt Counties, and in-depth personal interviews with half of the responding superintendents. The data were presented in charts and tables and analyzed narratively, focusing on trends, implications, and possible explanations.

The data presented in this chapter affords the following observations:

1. In the area of curriculum and program development, while the mandates of The School Code of Illinois are being met, the Educational Service Region would be more effective and efficient if more frequent contact were made with each individual school building. While the School Code only requires one visit per year, this does not appear to be adequate. Since neither the Regional Superintendent nor his Assistant Superintendent feels they have the necessary competency, background, or time for curricular work, the addition of a curriculum specialist

to the staff of the Regional Office of Education would both compliment and enhance the capabilities and prestige of that office. Another method of improving curriculum services would be the development of a curriculum library at the Regional Office. This library would have complete course descriptions and lists of materials and textbooks for successful courses in all academic disciplines. If the Educational Service Region--because of fiscal or time constraints--cannot provide these services, then the local school districts will be forced to develop more initiative in the curriculum area. Perhaps several of the districts could pool their resources to hire a curriculum consultant to be shared by all the participating districts.

2. Generally, while local school districts were aware of the services available from the Educational Service Region, there is room for improved communications. A step in this direction was taken with the recent development of a Regional Newsletter. While this was an important and worthwhile step for the Regional Office to take, and while it provided an excellent opportunity for the Educational Service

Region to funnel information to the local school districts, a Regional Newsletter provides only one-way communication. Most experts point out the value and need for two-way communication, citing not only the exchange of information but also the improved relations which frequently result. The monthly meetings held by the Regional Office of Education afford the local school districts the opportunity to utilize those values of two-way communications. Another method of two-way communications which could be utilized by the Educational Service Region would be the formation of a bi-county advisory committee. Many of the smaller districts surveyed in this study have common problems which such a committee could address.

3. The smaller school districts utilize and have the greatest need for the services provided by the Regional Office of Education. The development by the Educational Service Region of more cooperative educational programs for use by all the local school districts would save time and money for all concerned. Of particular interest to the smaller local districts would be programs in the area of curriculum development, gifted,

adult education, and computer services. At the same time, one must recognize that the Superintendent of the Educational Service Region is an elected position. Even though the larger local school districts have indicated less need for the services provided by the Regional Office, the Regional Superintendent must work with the larger districts to try to find some way to meet their needs, particularly if he is to continue to earn their support. Perhaps he could work with them to develop cooperative educational programs in some of the areas previously noted which would be based in some part on the participation of each district.

4. To add additional programs or expand present Regional Office of Education services would require new or additional sources of revenue. While there are no obvious new sources of funding available to the Educational Service Region, such funding is often the result of enabling legislation. It was noted earlier in this dissertation that there is an organization for Regional Superintendents and that it is studying that office's services and programs. This organization should also seek to develop a



strong, well-organized lobby in the state legislature with the aim of providing the needed new revenue sources.

5. The organization for Regional Superintendents is studying the thirty-six services and programs which are mandated by the Illinois School Code, with the intention of obtaining legislation which would streamline and modernize the Regional Office of Education. The current number of mandated services and programs is unreasonable for a large Educational Service Region, particularly since some--sale of township lands, make a list of districts for treasurers, and file poll books and election returns--are antiquated, while others--issue school bus driver permits, provide in-service training for bus drivers, and hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws--could be handled by other agencies such as the Secretary of State's office.
6. Whenever there are two organizations such as the Regional Office of Education and a local educational agency, each headed by its own administrator, it is certainly possible to encounter differing educational philosophies or

leadership styles. Consequently, then, whenever a study is conducted which asks one administrator to evaluate the performance of another, those personal differences can color the responses. This holds true where there are strong differences or strong agreements, and it must be considered when analyzing accumulated data.

7. Considering the demands placed on it for time, information, and help, the Regional Office of Education is, basically, doing a good job. In the performance of all its duties, however, the Educational Service Region has little extra time available for more individual attention to the needs of the local school districts. With the present influx of computer systems into many school districts, perhaps the Regional Office of Education should investigate the possibility of adding a computer to more efficiently handle the operation of the office and the acquisition of data. This increased efficiency could allow the Regional Superintendent to devote more time to working with the local school districts in an effort to meet more of their needs.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The general purpose of this study was to analyze the relationships which exist between the Regional Office of Education for McLean/DeWitt Counties and the local school districts which it serves. Particular attention was given to the services and responsibilities of the Regional Office and their effect upon the relationships with local school districts. In addition, an attempt was made to identify other factors which could have an influence on those relationships.

Chapter IV consists of three sections. The conclusions derived from this analysis of the relationships between the Educational Service Region for McLean/DeWitt Counties and selected school districts are presented in the first subdivision. Recommendations developed from the research for this study and implications for further study are presented in the second section. The concluding portion of Chapter IV is a succinct summary of this research study.

### Conclusions

This portion of Chapter IV regarding the conclusions derived from the study of existing relationships between the McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education and the local school districts it serves is divided into nine subportions. The nine major questions presented on pages 12-14 of Chapter I of this study each act as a subsection. Each question is reiterated and followed by a summary of the conclusions attained relating to the question as a direct result of this research.

Question #1--What does The School Code of Illinois identify as the major responsibilities of the Educational Service Region? How are those responsibilities further broken down into groups such as services or requirements? Which of these responsibilities are mandated and which are discretionary?

Three conclusions were reached regarding the responsibilities identified by the Illinois School Code for the Regional Office of Education.

1. The School Code of Illinois identifies thirty-six responsibilities of the Educational Service Region in the form of duties or powers. The "Educational Service Region Study Commission Briefing Book" reduces that list to thirty-two

major responsibilities of the Regional Superintendent.

2. The Illinois School Code divides the responsibilities into "Duties of county superintendent" and "Powers of county superintendent." The School Code makes no other subdivisions or delineation of responsibilities.
3. Those twenty-two responsibilities listed as "Duties of county superintendent" are mandated. Some of the fourteen responsibilities listed as "Powers of county superintendent" are worded in such a manner as to make them mandatory while others appear to be discretionary in nature. Mandatory powers include: various reports, a yearly census for special education, and the operation of a high school equivalency testing program. Discretionary powers include: recommending the remission of certain penalties, removing school board members, and employing assistants.

Question #2--How is the Educational Service Region organized to carry out the responsibilities identified by the Illinois School Code?

One conclusion was reached in regard to this question. The Regional Office is well organized, with each

person having clearly defined responsibilities and duties. Yet, the Regional Superintendent has placed a heavy emphasis on cross-training the staff so that everyone is capable of pitching in on a job during times of need or the absence of an individual. The responsibilities assigned to the Regional Office of Education by the Illinois School Code have been relatively evenly distributed among the office staff members, with tasks assigned so that no one staff member is overburdened. Tasks are also assigned in the areas of specialization or training of each staff member, and they are closely monitored by the Regional Superintendent and his Assistant Superintendent.

Question #3--How is the Regional Office of Education funded in order to provide the staff, facilities, and equipment necessary to offer the services and fulfill the requirements established by the Illinois School Code?

Three conclusions were reached regarding the funding of an Educational Service Region:

1. There are three basic sources of funds for the provision and operation of a Regional Office of Education:

State--the salaries of the Regional Superintendent and the first Assistant Regional Superintendent are based on qualifications

and/or the size of the Region; the state also provides a supervisory expense fund.

County--the county provides funds for Educational Service Region office space, utilities, approved secretarial help, and general operating expenses.

Fees--specified fees for certain Regional Office of Education services are used to fund other services such as institutes, workshops, and training sessions.

2. The inclusion of antiquated services as responsibilities, the attempts to shift funding responsibilities from one governmental agency to another, and generally inadequate funding prevent the Educational Service Region from providing services needed by local school districts.
3. If the services provided by the Educational Service Region are to be expanded, the present level of funding is inadequate.

Question #4--What are the specific activities and services available from the Educational Service Region office which meet the identified responsibilities? Are those activities and services

sufficiently broad enough to meet the required responsibilities?

The one conclusion reached in regard to this question is that the Regional Office of Education for McLean/DeWitt Counties is providing all the activities and services required of it by the Illinois School Code, and those activities and services are of a sufficiently broad nature. This delivery of services is being accomplished through the proper utilization of funds, available office personnel, and resource groups.

Question #5--What evidence or documentation is available from the Regional Office of Education to show that it is actually conducting the services and activities required to meet its responsibilities as identified? Does any of this material indicate that the Educational Service Region has established its own priorities from among the responsibilities established by the Illinois School Code?

There is ample evidence and documentation in the forms of files, reports, calendars of activities, visible materials, records, and newspaper accounts to indicate that the Regional Office of Education for McLean/DeWitt Counties is actually performing those activities and services required of it by the Illinois School Code. On the other hand, there is no evidence available from any source to



suggest that the McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education has established its own priorities from among the responsibilities put forth by the Illinois School Code. Most of the hard evidence discussed above, however, seems to indicate that the activities and services provided by the Educational Service Region are primarily administrative in nature and are not educationally enriching. Again, this appears to be the result of the dictates of the state of Illinois rather than the choice of the Regional Superintendent and his staff.

Question #6--To what extent are the superintendents of local school districts aware of the major responsibilities and specific services available from the Educational Service Region? In instances where superintendents are not aware of the major responsibilities of the Regional Office of Education, what are the reasons for this lack of awareness?

Four conclusions were reached regarding the awareness of local superintendents about the responsibilities or available services of the Educational Service Region.

1. It is apparent that the majority of the superintendents in McLean and DeWitt Counties are aware of the major responsibilities and specific services available from the Regional Office of

Education. Evidence of this awareness stems from the fact that 85 percent of the total responses to the question of awareness were affirmative in nature.

2. The primary sources of the superintendents' knowledge were personal experiences, sharing of information by colleagues (superintendents), information from the Regional Office of Education, and information from in-district personnel such as assistant superintendents, principals, or teachers.
3. Reasons given for a lack of knowledge on the part of the superintendents included: the service is not the type one would usually associate with the Regional Office of Education, the superintendent never experienced a personal need for a particular service, that particular service is no longer needed by local school districts, or the district performs the service itself.
4. McLean and DeWitt Counties have two organizations for superintendents which significantly contribute to the sharing of knowledge by all involved.

Question #7--To what extent are superintendents of local school districts utilizing the services of the Educational Service Region as identified? Which services are most and least frequently utilized? In instances where services are infrequently utilized, what are the reasons for them not being fully utilized? Are the local school district superintendents ever discouraged from using services provided by the Educational Service Region? If so, by whom or what?

There were four conclusions attained concerning the utilization of Regional Office of Education services.

1. Of the twenty-five major responsibilities and services listed on the survey instrument, 60 percent are used no more than one or two times a year by the school districts. Again, one should be cautious about jumping to too harsh a conclusion based on this data simply because of the design of some of the services to be infrequently utilized.
2. The most frequently used Regional Office of Education services were: (1) the issuance of school bus driver permits, (2) the provision of truancy services, (3) the notification of districts of monies sent to treasurers, and (4) the

issuance of employment certificates for minors under sixteen years of age. The least frequently used services were: (1) the removal of school board members, (2) the sale of township fund lands, (3) the recommendation for the suspension of certificates, and (4) the notification of elections.

3. The primary reason for the lack of utilization of services by the superintendents is that the very nature of many of the services offered by the Regional Office of Education precludes their use more than one or two times a year.
4. There is no indication that the local school district superintendents are ever discouraged from using Educational Service Region services other than by the excessive paperwork and time involved with some of the services.

Question #8--To what extent do local school district superintendents and the superintendent of the Educational Service Region agree as to the awareness of the local school district superintendents and their utilization of services offered by the Educational Service Region?

The one conclusion reached in regard to this

question was that there was almost unanimous agreement

between the Regional Superintendent and the local superintendents concerning awareness, but there was some disagreement present concerning utilization of services. That is, the superintendent of the Educational Service Region projected a higher level of service utilization than was indicated by the local educational agency superintendents. The reason for the disagreement was that the survey instrument made no allowance for service utilization by district personnel other than the superintendent. Therefore, the responses of the superintendents did not accurately depict their districts' utilization of Regional Office of Education services.

Question #9--What steps can be taken to improve the relationship between the Educational Service Region office and the local school districts? Does the Regional Office of Education have the authority to take those steps itself, or must the Illinois Office of Education increase the authority of the Educational Service Region to allow them to expand their services?

There were twelve conclusions drawn from the data accumulated for this last question.

1. Sixty-nine percent of the services listed on the survey instrument were judged to be necessary by the local school district superintendents. This

means that one-third of the present Regional Office of Education services could theoretically be replaced by programs of greater value to local school districts. Viewed from a more realistic standpoint, there may be a few services which could be replaced.

2. The local superintendents would like to see the following services offered by the Regional Office of Education:
  - a. Programs and services currently available from the State Board of Education Service Centers and Program Service Teams;
  - b. More educational cooperative programs such as vocational, special education, adult education, cooperative purchases, computer services, gifted, and curriculum specialists;
  - c. Supervision and visitation as now performed by the state's Department of Recognition and Supervision;
  - d. More Regional Office of Education authority and input into the determination and clarification of teacher qualifications for various types of certificates.
3. Those superintendents who have experience with more than one Educational Service Region rated

the McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education as good as or better than all the others they have encountered.

4. Both the local school district superintendents and the Regional Superintendent view their existing relationship as good, with the local superintendents attributing this to efficient, capable Regional Office of Education personnel and good, dependable service from that office.
5. The services available from the Regional Office of Education are necessary to some small districts which, for a variety of reasons such as money, size, and personnel, could not provide those services for themselves. Therefore, those services are of a greater benefit to the smaller school districts within the region.
6. While there are numerous opportunities for the obtaining, dispersing, or exchange of information about Regional Office of Education services, this information is not reaching all of the superintendents in the Service Region. In particular, greater efforts must be made by the Regional Superintendent and his staff to make all local school district superintendents in the two counties aware of all the services

available from the Regional Office of Education. No assumptions can be made that a superintendent or district does not need information because of its proximity to the Regional Office, tenure of the superintendent, or size of the district. Enough negative answers were given on the questionnaire to show that almost all of the superintendents in the region need some additional information about Regional Office of Education services.

7. The length of the tenure of the local educational agency superintendent does not relate to the level of his awareness of services available from the Educational Service Region. Forty percent of the negative responses came from the group of superintendents with the longest tenure in their present positions.
8. Those school districts which are either very close to or very far from the Regional Office of Education are most aware of available services, while the "average" group of school districts that are between six and twenty-six miles away from the Educational Service Region is least aware of services that are available.



9. The small school districts are least aware of the services available from the Regional Office of Education.
10. The length of the tenure of the local school district superintendent does not relate to the utilization of available Educational Service Region services in that all of the superintendents make use of those services at about the same rate.
11. Those school districts that are an average distance away from the Regional Office of Education utilize available services the most.
12. The small school districts use Educational Service Region services more frequently than do the big districts.

### Recommendations

This section of Chapter IV contains recommendations relative to the relationships which exist between the Regional Office of Education for McLean/DeWitt Counties and its local school districts. It also presents recommendations for further study.

The recommendations concerning the McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education and its local school districts are as follows.

1. The Regional Office of Education should make what revisions it can in the services it offers to the local districts. It should work with the necessary governmental agencies to refinance or add finances which would allow the provision of more services needed by the local school districts it serves. It should accomplish what it can by itself, and it should work with other Educational Service Regions and the Illinois Office of Education to make the necessary legal changes which would allow more extensive revision of programs and services.
2. The McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education must continue to employ and train the best available personnel to provide fast, efficient service to the districts it serves.
3. The Regional Office of Education should seek ways to reduce local school district time spent in processing Regional Office of Education service-related paperwork through the elimination of same or possible training of district personnel for more efficient collection and handling of data. This is one area where the use of an effective computer program could be of great benefit to all parties involved.

4. Local school district superintendents should make greater use of available Regional Office of Education resources and services, especially information about possible scholarships for their students, help in planning institutes or in-service workshops, and help and information in the area of curriculum development.
5. Local school district superintendents should make the Regional Office of Education more aware of district needs so they can plan for better provision of services.
6. The Illinois School Code should be studied to determine which services are antiquated and should be eliminated and what new services are needed.
7. In addition to monthly superintendent meetings, other forms of communications should be established by the Regional Office of Education.
8. There should be a periodic evaluation of the Educational Service Region and its delivery system by the local school district superintendents.

The recommendations for further study are as follows.

1. A follow-up study should be conducted in the McLean/DeWitt Region in approximately five

years. This period of time would allow sufficient time for changes to be made in the programs and services offered by the Regional Office of Education. This interval would also allow enough time to judge the effects such changes would have on the relationship between the Regional Office of Education and the local school districts it serves.

2. A replication of this study should be conducted elsewhere in Illinois with two changes: the use of either one large Region with more districts or several Regions with more districts and the inclusion of assistant superintendents and principals in the sample group. These two changes would provide more data from which conclusions could be drawn. Comparisons could then be made with this study, and the resulting conclusions could then be used to provide a model for all Regional Offices of Education to follow.

### Summary

The general purpose of this study was to analyze the existing relationship between the McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education and the school districts it serves. Specifically, the study sought to reflect the awareness and utilization of the Regional Office of Education services by

local school district superintendents, the reasons for that awareness and utilization, and then allow that information to be used to help this and other Educational Service Regions to provide better service to their districts.

Personal interviews and a questionnaire were used to collect the data for this study. Eleven of a possible sixteen local school district superintendents responded to the survey instrument. Following the analysis of the questionnaire, personal interviews were conducted with five of the responding superintendents. The Regional Superintendent was also interviewed and asked to provide information necessary for the completion of this study. All of the data were then analyzed, conclusions were drawn, and recommendations made based upon those conclusions.

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## APPENDIX A

Regional Office of Education and Local School District Re-  
lationship Survey

All responses or answers to any or all parts of this instrument are made voluntarily, and all information supplied by the respondents will be treated as confidential in nature. Data accumulated from completed questionnaires will be treated in a professional manner, but will not, in any instance, be identified with a specific individual or school.

Section I

1. Is your district a secondary or a unit district? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the size of your district in square miles? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the student population of your district? 

K-8  
9-12

 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How many years have you been in your present position? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Please summarize your years of previous administrative experience: \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is the equalized assessed valuation per ADA pupil of your district? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is the expenditure per ADA pupil of your district as listed on last year's Annual Finance Statement? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Are there limitations or restrictions which, in effect, prohibit or severely limit your district's utilization of services offered by the Regional Office of Education? If so, please summarize them.

9. Are there certain variables, such as school district size, tenure of the superintendent, distance from the Regional Office, etc., which contribute to your use--or lack of it--of services offered by the Regional Office? If so, please list them.
10. Are there services, possibly presently offered by other agencies, which could best be offered by the Regional Office? If so, please identify the service and, if possible, the agency which offers it.
11. Is there a need for services which are not being offered by any agency and which could be offered by the Regional Office? If so, please identify the service(s).
12. Are you ever discouraged from using services provided by the Regional Office? If so, why, and by whom or by what?
13. What steps can be taken to improve the services and the relationship between the Educational Service Region Office and your school district?
14. What should be the structure and function of the Regional Office of Education? That is, what size area and population should this office serve? Should the Regional Superintendent be elected or appointed and by whom? To whom should he/she be responsible?

15. If you have had previous experience working with a Regional Office other than the McLean-DeWitt office, please compare that office with the McLean-DeWitt office in terms of service and relationships with local school districts.
  
16. How do you perceive the relationship between the Regional Office of Education and your school district? Professional--unprofessional? Satisfactory--unsatisfactory? Good--bad? Other terms?



Duty or service from the Regional Office	Are you aware of the availability of this duty or service?		How frequently do you or your district use this service?				Is this service or some part of it really needed?	
	Yes	No	monthly	5-6 times /year	1-2 times /year	never	Yes	No
See that all legal curriculum requirements are met								
Provide truancy services								
Provide a GED program								
Direct cooperative educational programs								
Issue school bus driver permits								
Provide in-service training for bus drivers								
Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws								



Duty or service from the Regional Office	Are you aware of the availability of this duty or service?		How frequently do you or your district use this service?				Is this service or some part of it really needed?	
	Yes	No	monthly	5-6 times /year	1-2 times /year	never	Yes	No
Issue employment certificates for minors under sixteen								
Keep a map of school districts								
Make a list of districts for treasurers								
Assume responsibility for certain scholarships								
Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds								
Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers								

Duty or service from the Regional Office	Are you aware of the availability of this duty or service?		How frequently do you or your district use this service?				Is this service or some part of it really needed?	
	Yes	No	monthly	5-6 times /year	1-2 times /year	never	Yes	No
Examine treasurer's books, accounts and vouchers								
Sell township fund lands								
Give notice of elections								
File poll books and election returns								
Remove school board members for wilful failure to perform official duties								

## APPENDIX B

1. Is your district a secondary or a unit district?

- |          |          |                |
|----------|----------|----------------|
| (1) unit | (5) unit | (9) unit       |
| (2) unit | (6) unit | (10) unit      |
| (3) unit | (7) unit | (11) secondary |
| (4) unit | (8) unit |                |

2. What is the size of your district in square miles?

- |          |         |           |
|----------|---------|-----------|
| (1) 99.4 | (5) 136 | (9) 154   |
| (2) 99   | (6) N/A | (10) 10.5 |
| (3) 95   | (7) 75  | (11) 57.5 |
| (4) 76.4 | (8) 377 |           |

3. What is the student population of your district?

- |         |         |           |
|---------|---------|-----------|
| (1) 300 | (5) 135 | (9) 305   |
| (2) 176 | (6) 562 | (10) 1700 |
| (3) 260 | (7) 100 | (11) 51   |
| (4) 170 | (8) 855 |           |

4. How many years have you been in your present position?

- |        |       |         |
|--------|-------|---------|
| (1) 3  | (5) 1 | (9) 5   |
| (2) 4  | (6) 4 | (10) 11 |
| (3) 24 | (7) 1 | (11) 13 |
| (4) 10 | (8) 1 |         |

5. Please summarize your years of previous administrative experience.

- |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| (1) 5 yr. supt. K-8   | (5) 3 yr. prin.    |
| 5 yr. supt. K-8       | 6 yr. asst. supt.  |
| 5 yr. asst. supt.     | 3 yr. supt.        |
| 3 yr. supt. K-12      | (6) 4 yr. HS prin. |
| (2) 2 yr. IOE         | 22 yr. supt.       |
| 4 yr. dean (JC)       | (7) 10 yr. supt.   |
| 2 yr. asst. supt.     | 2 yr. supt.        |
| (3) 1 yr. asst. prin. | (8) none           |
| 2 yr. prin.           |                    |
| 3 yr. supt.           |                    |
| (4) 3 yr. prin.       |                    |
| 3 yr. pers. admn.     |                    |
| 1 yr. supt.           |                    |

6. What is the equalized assessed valuation per ADA pupil of your district?

(1) 43,500	(5) 114,473	(9) 75,000
(2) 68,960.57	(6) N/A	(10) 52,000
(3) 48,600	(7) 69,917.78	(11) 187,692.39

7. What is the expenditure per ADA pupil of your district as listed on last year's Annual Financial Statement?

(1) 1,650	(5) 3,109	(9) 1,700
(2) 2,527	(6) N/A	(10) 2,300
(3) 2,222	(7) 2,382.56	(11) 4,854.42
(4) 2,164.69	(8) 1,620.90	

8. Are there limitations or restrictions which, in effect, prohibit or severely limit your district's utilization of services offered by the Regional Office? If so, please summarize them.

(1) no	(5) distance (minor)	(9) no
(2) no	(6) no	(10) no
(3) no	(7) no	(11) none
(4) no	(8) no	

9. Are there certain variables, such as school district size, tenure of the superintendent, distance from the Regional Office, etc., which contribute to your use--or lack of it--of services offered by the Regional Office? If so, please list them.

no, no, none, no, distance, no, no, no, no, yes--services as such from the Regional Office are nonexistent, my definition--educational benefits offered to expand local district efforts, none

10. Are there services, possibly presently offered by other agencies, which could best be offered by the Regional office? If so, please identify the service and, if possible, the agency which offers it.

all intermediate state office, yes--State Board of Education's Service Centers, supervision as now performed by state Department of Recognition and Supervision, visitation for State Board of Education evaluation, none, educational cooperatives, programs offered by ISBE through Program Service Teams, Federal Programs through ICEI, no, no, yes--vocational--dist 87, trainable--dist 87, educational service--SBE, computer service--dist 87

11. Is there a need for services which are not being offered by any agency and which could be offered by the Regional Office? If so, please identify the service(s).

no, cooperative purchases--supplies, cooperative programs--film library, vocational, special education, gifted, no, certification clarification on university level so graduates know what they are certified to teach, regional specialized programs, no, no, educational services that could be incrementally purchased--curriculum specialists, etc.

12. Are you ever discouraged from using services provided by the Regional Office? If so, why, and by whom or by what?

no, no, no, no, no, no, no, not here, no, no, services are nonexistent

13. What steps can be taken to improve the services and the relationship between the Educational Service Region office and your school district?

its ok, add other available services to districts and eliminate SBE area service centers which are too distant to provide much service, none, none, none, everything is fine, good as is, none, no, ESR becomes involved in developing services that can be prorated back to user districts

14. What should be the structure and function of the Regional Office of Education. That is, what size area and population should this office serve? Should the Regional Superintendent be elected or appointed? And by whom? To whom should he/she be responsible?

appointed by local superintendents, no larger than presently exists. Elected but must have/or be certified administrator. Local public, state divided into twenty regions (no larger than thirty-mile radius) appointed with regional powers of the state--responsible to state superintendent--actually function as regional offices, basically it should be administrative in structure, not command, size is not major area of concern, appointed by state board and responsible to same, do away with ROE, 2 to 4 counties--elected, elected by the school administrators in the area served and responsible to State Board of executive committee, present status ok, no opinion, one per 200,000 population--appointed by elected board--to the board

15. If you have had previous experience working with a Regional Office other than the McLean/DeWitt office, please compare that office with the McLean/DeWitt office in terms of service and relationships with local school districts.

about same, assume McLean/DeWitt one of the best, no other experience, very good, N/A, good service and relationships here, none, very good, none

16. How do you perceive the relationship between the Regional Office of Education and your school district? Professional--unprofessional? Satisfactory--unsatisfactory? Good--bad? Other terms?

professional and satisfactory, very professional and cooperative also supportive, professional and satisfactory and good, professional, professional, professional and satisfactory and good, good, professional, mutual coexistence, excellent

Please place an X in all appropriate boxes below:

Duty or service from the Regional Office	Are you aware of the availability of this duty or service?		How frequently do you or your district use this service?				Is this service or some part of it really needed?	
	Yes	No	monthly	5-6 times /year	1-2 times /year	never	Yes	No
Responsible for institutes or in-service workshops	11	0	0	0	8	0	7	2
Visit each school once a year	10	1	0	0	7	3	6	2
Direct and advise teachers and school officers	9	0	0	2	6	0	8	1
Inspect all building plans and schools	10	0	0	0	8	2	8	2
Keep texts available for inspection	5	6	0	0	1	8	1	9
Register certificates	11	0	0	0	9	1	8	1
Recommend the suspension of certificates	11	0	0	0	1	8	6	3



Duty or service from the Regional Office	Are you aware of the availability of this duty or service?		How frequently do you or your district use this service?				Is this service or some part of it really needed?	
	Yes	No	monthly	5-6 times /year	1-2 times /year	never	Yes	No
See that all legal curriculum requirements are met	11	0	0	0	6	3	8	1
Provide truancy services	11	0	0	3	7	0	10	0
Provide a GED program	9	1	0	0	4	4	7	3
Direct cooperative educational programs	7	4	0	0	6	3	7	3
Issue school bus driver permits	11	0	5	3	2	1	10	1
Provide in-service training for bus drivers	11	0	0	2	8	1	10	0
Hold hearings for bus drivers who violate traffic laws	11	0	0	0	5	5	10	1

Duty or service from the Regional Office	Are you aware of the availability of this duty or service?		How frequently do you or your district use this service?				Is this service or some part of it really needed?	
	Yes	No	monthly	5-6 times /year	1-2 times /year	never	Yes	No
Issue employment certificates for minors under sixteen	7	4	1	1	4	4	4	7
Keep a map of school districts	11	0	0	0	0	6	8	1
Make a list of districts for treasurers	9	2	0	1	2	6	4	5
Assume responsibility for certain scholarships	7	4	0	1	4	3	5	4
Evaluate and file school treasurer's bonds	11	0	1	0	6	2	7	3
Notify the districts of monies sent to treasurers	11	0	2	2	3	1	8	2

Duty or service from the Regional Office	Are you aware of the availability of this duty or service?		How frequently do you or your district use this service?				Is this service or some part of it really needed?	
	Yes	No	monthly	5-6 times /year	1-2 times /year	never	Yes	No
Examine treasurer's books, accounts and vouchers	8	3	1	1	3	3	4	5
Sell township fund lands	6	5	0	0	0	9	4	6
Give notice of elections	7	4	0	0	1	7	4	5
File poll books and election returns	6	5	0	0	2	7	3	7
Remove school board members for wilful failure to perform official duties	9	2	0	0	0	10	5	6

## APPENDIX C

## McLEAN-DeWITT REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION

I. OVERVIEW: As indicated in past reports, Regional Offices of Education in the State of Illinois are often referred to as the Intermediate Office. Not too many years ago there were 102 "County Superintendents." Until August of 1979 there was a reduced number of seventy-eight Regional Superintendents. Now, and for the foreseeable future, there are fifty-seven Regional Offices of Education and what was the McLean County Regional Office of Education is now McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education.

It should be of interest to the reader that an amendment was placed on an education bill during the last legislature that required the State Board of Education to study the Regional Offices of Education and to make certain specific recommendations as to their number, services, and responsibilities. A special task force was established by the SBE along with an advisory committee. This reporter was one of four Regional Superintendents appointed to the advisory committee. Although the special study commission has completed its report and five public hearings have been held up and down and across the State of Illinois on said reports, the State Board of Education has yet to formulate its recommendations for the legislature, as of this writing.

Pending changes, the Regional Offices of Education shall be headed by an elected Superintendent and an Assistant Superintendent paid by the State of Illinois, the Illinois State Board of Education. As prescribed by state statutes, the counties of a given region shall continue to provide in their budgets for the monies necessary to support personnel and operation of the Regional Office of Education. The 1978-79 McLean County ROE budget provided by the McLean County Board was approximately \$45,000. The money is provided for the same period by the State Board of Education totaled approximately \$70,000.

II. REGIONAL INTERMEDIATE OFFICE DUTIES: It should be noted, this report covers the transition from a single county Regional Office (McLean County) to a dual county Regional Office of Education for McLean and DeWitt Counties. As of this writing, each of the seventy-five attendance centers of the McLean/DeWitt Region has been visited by representatives of this office no less than once. These visits were for the purposes of evaluating buildings in

terms of lifesafety codes as prescribed by the State of Illinois, reviewing food services, transportation, curriculum, proper teacher certification and assignments, and district evaluations. During this time seven districts were evaluated by the Illinois Office of Education in conjunction with this Regional Office.

A. REPORTS, CLAIMS, AND APPLICATIONS: A major responsibility of the Regional Office is to process state reports and furnish statistical information. Such reports are distributed and collected by this office and are interpreted as needed to local school officials and, upon request, to interested citizenry and the media. Reports completed by the local school districts are verified by the Regional Office staff, signed and forwarded to the State Board of Education. (See Appendix I, Annual Data Acquisition Plan for 1978-79 for details of mandated reporting.) Data and files of information of all records and reports of a public nature are maintained in the Regional Office of Education.

B. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS: "Check and double check" is in the best interest of taxpayers of the State of Illinois. Monies due local school districts in as many as twelve different categories are received and disbursed through the Regional Office of Education. Appendix II provides a breakdown of these various funds, which totals \$11,362,463.11. (Almost one million dollars more than the prior year.)

C. IN-SERVICE: A significant responsibility of the Regional Office of Education is to provide for continuous improvement by way of institutes and workshops. This office has authorized and financially assisted the various districts within the county in conducting workshops. Topics were identified at the local level to meet their most pressing needs as determined by the teachers and administrators.

Within the State's educational community, McLean County--and now DeWitt County--is probably best known for its sponsorship of the Annual Reading Conference these past twenty-three years. In 1979-80 experts in the field of reading came from all parts of Illinois to give leadership to the conference. (See Appendix III)

Monthly meetings were held for McLean County and DeWitt County educational administrators with programs planned to meet regional needs. The Regional Office of Education has worked closely with both the Elementary and Secondary Principals' Organization in planning the programs and in securing quality speakers. (See Appendix IV)

D. GED TESTING: During this past year, the McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education has implemented what is perhaps one of the most innovative approaches to proctoring the High School Equivalency Examination in the State of Illinois. In cooperation with the McLean County Retired Teachers' Association, our tests are proctored by retired teachers and administrators and administered at least monthly. In addition, this same group proctors GED (General Educational Development) tests given in the McLean County Jail to inmates who have participated in preparation classes while incarcerated. Article 3-15.2 of the Illinois School Code names the Regional Office of Education as the administrative agent for the GED testing program. Heretofore the McLean County Regional Office of Education has contracted with Illinois State University for the administration and proctoring of this test. This change is a result of an effort by this office to be responsive to wishes and needs as stated by adult and continuing education teachers and those entering the program.

The Regional Office of Education is particularly appreciative of the facilities (Room 207) provided within the McLean County Courthouse for this testing program. They have proven to be adequate and have afforded the side effect of exposing those who are often among the estranged from government to the value of the so-called "establishment." During 1978-79 225 applicants took the GED examination and 150 certificates were issued.

E. FILM LIBRARY COOPERATIVE: The Regional Office of Education serves as the administrator and fiscal agent for the McLean County Film Library Cooperative. This cooperative serves all the schools in McLean and DeWitt Counties. Currently the library contains 1,200 educational films and circulates approximately 400 films per week during the school year. The library continues to receive science films from Funks International on a monthly basis. This constitutes a significant contribution to the schools of the region.

F. CERTIFICATION OF TEACHERS: The Regional Office of Education is responsible for ensuring that all teachers are properly certificated for their assignments. This involves a thorough screening of the 1,600 teachers employed in the counties by local districts. As a service to the teachers, members of the staff annually go to the schools to register certificates. Approximately 95 percent of the active teachers take advantage of this service. The Regional Office processes teachers' applications for certification, provides counseling and advice to students, and interprets the various rules and regulations pertaining to the certification of teachers. During 1978-79, this office has:

- (1) issued 495 certificates
- (2) registered/renewed 4,500 teachers' certificates
- (3) administered and scored thirty-six tests on the Federal and State constitutions (for teachers only)
- (4) arranged for sixty-five name changes
- (5) arranged for ten degree changes
- (6) ordered and issued forty-nine duplicate certificates
- (7) secured forty-two teacher aide approvals.

G. CERTIFICATION OF BUS DRIVERS: Certification of bus drivers is done solely by the Regional Office of Education, and 421 school bus drivers were issued permits to drive buses during the past year.

As required by legislation, all school bus drivers must complete a twelve-hour training course which includes such things as passenger control, first aid, safety, and law. Additionally, renewing drivers must take a two-hour refresher course annually. One of the four McLean County instructors is a member of the Regional Office staff. This staff member conducted one twelve-hour session and six refresher courses.

In the event a school bus driver has two moving violations within a two-year period, it is required that the Regional Superintendent conduct a hearing. This hearing is to determine whether or not the school bus driver's permit should be revoked. Testimony regarding the circumstances is taken and the superintendent renders a decision. During this reporting period, this Regional Superintendent conducted three such hearings. The 1979 legislature made it mandatory that Regional Superintendents make spot checks of drivers to be certain that they hold a proper school bus driver's permit.



H. TRUANCY SUPERVISION: The School Code of Illinois mandates the appointment of a truant officer to serve the various districts under its direction. The salary of such an officer is to be established by the County Boards. The Assistant Superintendent has been appointed as the Truant Officer in the McLean/DeWitt region. During this reporting year the truant officer has handled seventy-six cases of truancy. Sixteen of these cases were processed through the States Attorney's office and the court system. The Regional Office of Education is particularly pleased with the lines of communication and cooperation that were established in DeWitt County.

I. LIFE SAFETY: The Regional Superintendent of schools shares the responsibility for the safety of all buildings used by public school children. The McLean/DeWitt Regional Superintendent of schools, together with the State Architect and the Olympia school district's architect found it necessary to close the Atlanta school building, pending repair and reinforcement. Temporary facilities were approved by the Regional Superintendent in one of the church education buildings within the community of Atlanta. This facility housed primary grades displaced by the closure. Although, at the time of this report, there is every indication that the repairs and reinforcements necessary will be made in a timely fashion, the Board of Education understands that the temporary church facilities have been approved for use only through the 1979 calendar year.

The Regional Office assists school districts in obtaining money and approval for the repair and/or replacement of buildings in order that they be maintained in keeping with the School Life Safety Codes.

J. REGIONAL BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES: The Regional Superintendent serves as secretary to the Regional Board of School Trustees and arranged for quarterly and special meetings of the Board to discharge their duties.

As a result of the merger of McLean and DeWitt Counties Regional Offices, the last election of trustees constitutes a new McLean/DeWitt Regional Board of School Trustees. Of the seven member board, two are from DeWitt County and five are from McLean County. This new board met for organizational purposes in accordance with State statutes in August, 1979.

It should be noted that as a continuing follow-up of the McLean County Regional Board of School Trustees' request to the State Superintendent of Education, the Boards of Education of Special Charter District 87 (the Bloomington Public Schools) and the Normal Community Unit District Number 5 have authorized a study of their two districts. Merger study is being conducted by Dr. Deane Wiley of Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville Campus. The results of this detailed study and analysis should be forthcoming in January 1980.

III. OTHER SERVICES PERFORMED: The following is an itemization of other involvements and accomplishments of the McLean/DeWitt Regional Office of Education and its staff during the past year.

A. For the fourth year, served as administrative and fiscal agent for the cooperative purchasing project involving every school district in both counties, including the parochial schools. This project has grown from \$24,000 in 1976 to \$100,000 in 1978-79. Considerable savings were realized by each participating school; however, of increased importance is the fact that a supply to the schools was assured as a result of the collective buying power. Other Regional Offices have used our procedures as a means of initiating a similar service for their constituents school districts.

B. Rendered over one hundred interpretations of school law;

C. Prepared cooperative advertising published in the Pantagraph with mandated information pertinent to all school districts in the combined two-county region;

D. Continued to serve on the state study committee relative to the Illinois Soldiers and Sailors school;

E. Continued to serve on State ad hoc committee to study and revise the mandated requirements for physical education and to recommend legislative changes. Initial experimental programs were implemented throughout the state at the elementary level and the study now proceeds to the intermediate and secondary levels.

F. Served as secretary to the McLean County Special Education Advisory Committee at their quarterly meetings.

G. Continued to serve as a member of the twelve-man State Advisory Committee on Pupil Transportation;

H. Currently serving as one of two Regional Superintendents on an Illinois Department of Transportation Task force to study hazardous conditions for pupils as a result of the passage of the Senate Bill 100;

I. Continued to serve part of the year on the Executive Committee of the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents as president of the Area IV Superintendents;

J. Served as State Co-chairman of the legislative committee of Regional Superintendents;

K. Met with various groups such as Area Vocational Center, PTAs, Boards of Education, teachers' groups, retired teachers, CORE students and ISU classes, and was guest speaker before several service organizations and clubs;

L. Served as an advisory to non-public schools, lay public, and the McLean County/ISU Reading Council which is now entitled the McLean County-ISU-DeWitt County Reading Council (MID-State);

M. Administered the State's Special Education scholarship program;

N. Published a useful school directory for distribution to all teachers, administrators, and County Board members which included up-to-date information on certification requirements;

O. Approved the bond of each school treasurer for the school districts of the region;

P. In cooperation with the Teachers' Retirement System, provided opportunity for nearly 100 teachers to review their retirement record status in our office;

Q. Assisted enumerable social security applicants in verifying birth records from old school records maintained on microfilm;

R. Reviewed annual audit reports filed by Yates and West Township Commissioners;

S. Received a gubernatorial appointment to the State's Advisory Committee on Education of the Handicapped;

T. Served as an advisor to the Regional Study Commission.

Dennis H. Moll  
School of Education  
Administration and Supervision  
Doctor of Education

APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Dennis H. Moll has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. Robert L. Monks, Associate Professor Department of  
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Dr. Melvin P. Heller, Professor Department of Administration  
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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and the dissertation is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

4/19/82  
Date

Robert L. Monks  
Director's Signature